THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/chalmersessayist18chal

THE

BRITISH ESSAYISTS:

WITH

PREFACES,

HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL,

BY

A. CHALMERS, F. S. A

VOLUME XVIII.

BOSTON:
LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY.
M.DCCC.LVI.

RIVERSIDE, CAMBRIDGE:
PRINTED BY H. O. HOUGHTON AND COMPANY.

STEREOTYPED BY STONE AND SMART.

PR
1361
C35
1855
V.18

RAMBLER.

Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri,
Quo me cunque rapit tempestas, deferor hospes.
HOR. EPIST. i. 1. 14.

No. 134—208.

dup sx added ed UK

652274

CONTENTS.

VOL. XVIII.

NO.

134. Idleness an anxious and miserable State.....JOHNSON.

135. The Folly of annual Retreats into the Country.. ———

136. The Meanness and Mischiefs of indiscriminate Dedication ..... ———

137. The Necessity of Literary Courage..... ———

138. Original Characters to be found in the Country—The Character of Mrs. Busy..... ———

139. A Critical Examination of Samson Agonistes... ———

140. The Criticism continued..... ———

141. The Danger of attempting Wit in Conversation—The Character of Papilius..... ———

142. An Account of Squire Bluster..... ———

143. The Criterions of Plagiarism..... ———

144. The Difficulty of raising Reputation—The various Species of Detractors..... ———

NO.
145. Petty Writers not to be despised.....JOHNSON.
146. An Account of an Author travelling in quest of his own Character—The Uncertainty of Fame ———
147. The Courtier's Esteem of Assurance..... ———
148. The Cruelty of Parental Tyranny..... ———
149. Benefits not always entitled to Gratitude..... ———
150. Adversity useful to the Acquisition of Knowledge ———
151. The Climacterics of the Mind..... ———
152. Criticism on Epistolary Writings..... ———
153. The Treatment incurred by Loss of Fortune.... ———
154. The Inefficacy of Genius without Learning..... ———
155. The Usefulness of Advice—The Danger of Habits—The Necessity of reviewing Life..... ———
156. The Laws of Writing not always indisputable—Reflections on Tragi-Comedy..... ———
157. The Scholar's Complaint of his own Bashfulness ———
158. Rules of Writing drawn from Examples—Those Examples often mistaken..... ———
159. The Nature and Remedies of Bashfulness..... ———
160. Rules for the Choice of Associates..... ———
161. The Revolutions of a Garret..... ———
162. Old Men in danger of falling into Pupilage—The Conduct of Thrasybulus..... ———
163. The Mischiefs of following a Patron..... ———
164. Praise universally desired—The Failings of Eminent Men often imitated..... ———

NO.
165. The Impotence of Wealth—The Visit of Serotinus to the Place of his Nativity.....JOHNSON.
166. Favour not easily gained by the Poor..... ———
167. The Marriage of Hymenæus and Tranquilla..... ———
168. Poetry debased by mean Expressions—An Example from Shakspeare..... ———
169. Labour necessary to Excellence..... ———
170. The History of Misella debauched by her Relation..... ———
171. Misella's Description of the Life of a Prostitute.. ———
172. The Effect of sudden Riches upon the Manners.. ———
173. Unreasonable Fears of Pedantry..... ———
174. The Mischiefs of unbounded Raillery—History of Dicaculus..... ———
175. The Majority are wicked..... ———
176. Directions to Authors attacked by Critics—The various Degrees of Critical Perspicacity..... ———
177. An Account of a Club of Antiquaries..... ———
178. Many Advantages not to be enjoyed together.... ———
179. The awkward Merriment of a Student..... ———
180. The Study of Life not to be neglected for the Sake of Books..... ———
181. The History of an Adventurer in Lotteries..... ———
182. The History of Leviculus, the Fortune-hunter.. ———
183. The Influence of Envy and Interest compared... ———
184. The Subject of Essays often suggested by Chance —Chance equally prevalent in other Affairs... ———

NO.
185. The Prohibition of Revenge justifiable by Reason —The Meanness of Regulating our Conduct by the Opinions of Men.....JOHNSON.

186. Anningait and Ajut, a Greenland History..... ———

187. The History of Anningait and Ajut concluded.. ———

188. Favour often gained with little Assistance from Understanding..... ———

189. The Mischiefs of Falsehood—The Character of Turpicula..... ———

190. The History of Abousaid, the Son of Morad..... ———

191. The busy Life of a Young Lady..... ———

192. Love unsuccessful without Riches..... ———

193. The Author's Art of praising himself..... ———

194. A Young Nobleman's Progress in Politeness..... ———

195. A Young Nobleman's Introduction to the Knowledge of the Town..... ———

196. Human Opinions mutable—The Hopes of Youth fallacious ..... ———

197. The History of a Legacy-hunter..... ———

198. The Legacy-hunter's History concluded..... ———

199. The Virtues of Rabbi Abraham's Magnet..... ———

200. Asper's Complaint of the Insolence of Prospero—Unpoliteness not always the Effect of Pride... ———

201. The Importance of Punctuality..... ———

202. The Different Acceptations of Poverty—Cynics and Monks not Poor..... ———

203. The Pleasures of Life to be sought in Prospects of Futurity—Future Fame uncertain..... ———

NO.
204. The History of Ten Days of Seged, Emperor of Ethiopia ..... JOHNSON.
205. The History of Seged concluded..... ———
206. The Art of Living at the Cost of others..... ———
207. The Folly of continuing too long upon the Stage ———
208. The Rambler's Reception—His Design..... ———

THE RAMBLER.

No. 134. SATURDAY, JUNE 29, 1751.

Quis scit, an adjiciant hodiernæ crastina summæ
Tempora Di superi! HOR. CAR. iv. 7. 17.

Who knows if Heaven, with ever-bounteous power,
Shall add to-morrow to the present hour? FRANCIS.

I SAT yesterday morning employed in deliberating on which, among the various subjects that occurred to my imagination, I should bestow the paper of to-day. After a short effort of meditation by which nothing was determined, I grew every moment more irresolute, my ideas wandered from the first intention, and I rather wished to think, than thought upon any settled subject; till at last I was awakened from this dream of study by a summons from the press: the time was come for which I had been thus negligently purposing to provide, and, however dubious or sluggish, I was now necessitated to write.

Though to a writer whose design is so comprehensive and miscellaneous, that he may accommodate himself with a topic from every scene of life, or view of nature, it is no great aggravation of his task to be obliged to a sudden composition; yet I could not forbear to reproach myself for having so

long neglected what was unavoidably to be done, and of which every moment's idleness increased the difficulty. There was, however, some pleasure in reflecting that I, who had only trifled till diligence was necessary, might still congratulate myself upon my superiority to multitudes, who have trifled till diligence is vain; who can by no degree of activity or resolution recover the opportunities which have slipped away; and who are condemned by their own carelessness to hopeless calamity and barren sorrow.

The folly of allowing ourselves to delay what we know cannot be finally escaped, is one of the general weaknesses, which, in spite of the instruction of moralists, and the remonstrances of reason, prevail to a greater or less degree in every mind; even they who most steadily withstand it, find it, if not the most violent, the most pertinacious of their passions, always renewing its attacks, and though often vanquished, never destroyed.

It is, indeed, natural to have particular regard to the time present, and to be most solicitous for that which is by its nearness enabled to make the strongest impressions. When therefore any sharp pain is to be suffered, or any formidable danger to be incurred, we can scarcely exempt ourselves wholly from the seducements of imagination; we readily believe that another day will bring some support or advantage which we now want; and are easily persuaded, that the moment of necessity, which we desire never to arrive, is at a great distance from us.

Thus life is languished away in the gloom of anxiety, and consumed in collecting resolution which the next morning dissipates; in forming purposes which we scarcely hope to keep, and reconciling our-

selves to our own cowardice by excuses, which, while we admit them, we know to be absurd. Our firmness is by the continual contemplation of misery hourly impaired; every submission to our fear enlarges its dominion; we not only waste that time in which the evil we dread might have been suffered and surmounted, but even where procrastination produces no absolute increase of our difficulties, make them less superable to ourselves by habitual terrors. When evils cannot be avoided, it is wise to contract the interval of expectation; to meet the mischiefs which will overtake us if we fly; and suffer only their real malignity, without the conflicts of doubt and anguish of anticipation.

To act is far easier than to suffer; yet we every day see the progress of life retarded by the *vis inertiæ*, the mere repugnance to motion, and find multitudes repining at the want of that which nothing but idleness hinders them from enjoying. The case of Tantalus, in the region of poetic punishment, was somewhat to be pitied, because the fruits that hung about him retired from his hand; but what tenderness can be claimed by those who, though perhaps they suffer the pains of Tantalus, will never lift their hands for their own relief?

There is nothing more common among this torpid generation than murmurs and complaints; murmurs at uneasiness which only vacancy and suspicion expose them to feel, and complaints of distresses which it is in their own power to remove. Laziness is commonly associated with timidity. Either fear originally prohibits endeavours by infusing despair of success; or the frequent failure of irresolute struggles, and the constant desire of avoiding labour, impress by degrees false terrors on the mind. But fear, whether natural or acquired, when once it has

full possession of the fancy, never fails to employ it upon visions of calamity, such as, if they are not dissipated by useful employment, will soon overcast it with horrors, and imbitter life not only with those miseries by which all earthly beings are really more or less tormented, but with those which do not yet exist, and which can only be discerned by the perspicacity of cowardice.

Among all who sacrifice future advantage to present inclination, scarcely any gain so little as those that suffer themselves to freeze in idleness. Others are corrupted by some enjoyment of more or less power to gratify the passions; but to neglect our duties merely to avoid the labour of performing them, a labour which is always punctually rewarded, is surely to sink under weak temptations. Idleness never can secure tranquillity; the call of reason and of conscience will pierce the closest pavilion of the sluggard, and, though it may not have force to drive him from his down, will be loud enough to hinder him from sleep. Those moments which he cannot resolve to make useful by devoting them to the great business of his being, will still be usurped by powers that will not leave them to his disposal; remorse and vexation will seize upon them, and forbid him to enjoy what he is so desirous to appropriate.

There are other causes of inactivity incident to more active faculties and more acute discernment. He to whom many objects of pursuit arise at the same time, will frequently hesitate between different desires, till a rival has precluded him, or change his course as new attractions prevail, and harass himself without advancing. He who sees different ways to the same end, will, unless he watches carefully over his own conduct, lay out too much of his attention upon the comparison of probabilities and the adjust-

ment of expedients, and pause in the choice of his road, till some accident intercepts his journey. He whose penetration extends to remote consequences, and who, whenever he applies his attention to any design, discovers new prospects of advantage and possibilities of improvement, will not easily be persuaded that his project is ripe for execution; but will superadd one contrivance to another, endeavour to unite various purposes in one operation, multiply complications, and refine niceties, till he is entangled in his own scheme, and bewildered in the perplexity of various intentions. He that resolves to unite all the beauties of situation in a new purchase, must waste his life in roving to no purpose from province to province. He that hopes in the same house to obtain every convenience, may draw plans and study Palladio, but will never lay a stone. He will attempt a treatise on some important subject, and amass materials, consult authors, and study all the dependent and collateral parts of learning, but never conclude himself qualified to write. He that has abilities to conceive perfection, will not easily be content without it; and since perfection cannot be reached, will lose the opportunity of doing well in the vain hope of unattainable excellence.

The certainty that life cannot be long, and the probability that it will be much shorter than nature allows, ought to awaken every man to the active prosecution of whatever he is desirous to perform. It is true, that no diligence can ascertain success; death may intercept the swiftest career; but he who is cut off in the execution of an honest undertaking, has at least the honour of falling in his rank, and has fought the battle, though he missed the victory.

No. 135. TUESDAY, JULY 2, 1751.

Cœlum, non animum, mutant.— HOR. EPIST. i. 11. 27.

Place may be changed; but who can change his mind?

It is impossible to take a view on any side, or observe any of the various classes that form the great community of the world, without discovering the influence of example; and admitting with new conviction the observation of Aristotle, that man is an imitative being. The greater, far the greater number follow the track which others have beaten, without any curiosity after new discoveries, or ambition of trusting themselves to their own conduct. And, of those who break the ranks and disorder the uniformity of the march, most return in a short time from their deviation, and prefer the equal and steady satisfaction of security before the frolics of caprice and the honours of adventure.

In questions difficult or dangerous, it is, indeed, natural to repose upon authority, and when fear happens to predominate upon the authority of those whom we do not in general think wiser than ourselves. Very few have abilities requisite for the discovery of abstruse truth; and of those few some want leisure, and some resolution. But it is not so easy to find the reason of the universal submission to precedent where every man might safely judge for himself; where no irreparable loss can be hazarded, nor any mischief of long continuance incurred.

Vanity might be expected to operate where the more powerful passions are not awakened; the mere pleasure of acknowledging no superior might produce slight singularities, or the hope of gaining some new degree of happiness awaken the mind to invention or experiment.

If in any case the shackles of prescription could be wholly shaken off, and the imagination left to act without control, on what occasion should it be expected, but in the selection of lawful pleasure? Pleasure of which the essence is choice; which compulsion dissociates from every thing to which nature has united it; and which owes not only its vigour but its being to the smiles of liberty. Yet we see that the senses, as well as the reason, are regulated by credulity; and that most will feel, or say that they feel, the gratifications which others have taught them to expect.

At this time of universal migration, when almost every one, considerable enough to attract regard, has retired, or is preparing with all the earnestness of distress to retire, into the country; when nothing is to be heard but the hopes of speedy departure, or the complaints of involuntary delay; I have often been tempted to inquire what happiness is to be gained, or what inconvenience to be avoided, by this stated recession? Of the birds of passage, some follow the summer, and some the winter, because they live upon sustenance which only summer or winter can supply; but of the annual flight of human rovers it is much harder to assign the reason, because they do not appear either to find or seek any thing which is not equally afforded by the town and country.

I believe that many of these fugitives may have heard of men whose continual wish was for the quiet

of retirement, who watched every opportunity to steal away from observation, to forsake the crowd, and delight themselves with the society of solitude. There is, indeed, scarcely any writer who has not celebrated the happiness of rural privacy, and delighted himself and his reader with the melody of birds, the whisper of groves, and the murmur of rivulets; nor any man eminent for extent of capacity, or greatness of exploits, that has not left behind him some memorials of lonely wisdom and silent dignity.

But almost all absurdity of conduct arises from the imitation of those whom we cannot resemble. Those who thus testified their weariness of tumult and hurry, and hasted with so much eagerness to the leisure of retreat, were either men overwhelmed with the pressure of difficult employments, harassed with importunities, and distracted with multiplicity; or men wholly engrossed by speculative sciences, who having no other end of life but to learn and teach, found their searches interrupted by the common commerce of civility, and their reasonings disjointed by frequent interruptions. Such men might reasonably fly to that ease and convenience which their condition allowed them to find only in the country. The statesman who devoted the greater part of his time to the public, was desirous of keeping the remainder in his own power. The general, ruffled with dangers, wearied with labours, and stunned with acclamations, gladly snatched an interval of silence and relaxation. The naturalist was unhappy where the works of Providence were not always before him. The reasoner could adjust his systems only where his mind was free from the intrusion of outward objects.

Such examples of solicitude very few of those who

are now hastening from the town have any pretensions to plead in their own justification, since they cannot pretend either weariness of labour, or desire of knowledge. They purpose nothing more than to quit one scene of idleness for another, and after having trifled in public, to sleep in secrecy. The utmost that they can hope to gain is the change of ridiculousness to obscurity, and the privilege of having fewer witnesses to a life of folly. He who is not sufficiently important to be disturbed in his pursuits, but spends all his hours according to his own inclination, and has more hours than his mental faculties enable him to fill either with enjoyment or desires, can have nothing to demand of shades and valleys. As bravery is said to be a panoply, insignificancy is always a shelter.

There are, however, pleasures and advantages in a rural situation, which are not confined to philosophers and heroes. The freshness of the air, the verdure of the woods, the paint of the meadows, and the unexhausted variety which summer scatters upon the earth, may easily give delight to an unlearned spectator. It is not necessary that he who looks with pleasure on the colours of a flower should study the principles of vegetation, or that the Ptolemaic and Copernican system should be compared before the light of the sun can gladden, or its warmth invigorate. Novelty is itself a source of gratification; and Milton justly observes, that to him who has been long pent up in cities, no rural object can be presented which will not delight or refresh some of his senses.

Yet even these easy pleasures are missed by the greater part of those who waste their summer in the country. Should any man pursue his acquaintances to their retreats, he would find few of them listening

to Philomel, loitering in woods, or plucking daisies, catching the healthy gale of the morning, or watching the gentle coruscations of declining day. Some will be discovered at a window by the roadside, rejoicing when a new cloud of dust gathers towards them, as at the approach of a momentary supply of conversation, and a short relief of the tediousness of unideal vacancy. Others are placed in the adjacent villages, where they look only upon houses as in the rest of the year, with no change of objects but what a remove to any new street in London might have given them. The same set of acquaintances still settle together, and the form of life is not otherwise diversified than by doing the same things in a different place. They pay and receive visits in the usual form, they frequent the walks in the morning, they deal cards at night, they attend to the same tattle, and dance with the same partners; nor can they at their return to their former habitation congratulate themselves on any other advantage, than that they have passed their time like others of the same rank; and have the same right to talk of the happiness and beauty of the country, of happiness which they never felt, and beauty which they never regarded.

To be able to procure its own entertainments, and to subsist upon its own stock, is not the prerogative of every mind. There are, indeed, understandings so fertile and comprehensive, that they can always feed reflection with new supplies, and suffer nothing from the preclusion of adventitious amusements; as some cities have within their own walls inclosed ground enough to feed their inhabitants in a siege. But others live only from day to day, and must be constantly enabled, by foreign supplies, to keep out the encroachments of languor and stupidity. Such

could not, indeed, be blamed for hovering within reach of their usual pleasure, more than any other animal for not quitting its native element, were not their faculties contracted by their own fault. But let not those who go into the country, merely because they dare not be left alone at home, boast their love of nature, or their qualifications for solitude; nor pretend that they receive instantaneous infusions of wisdom from the Dryads, and are able, when they leave smoke and noise behind, to act, or think, or reason for themselves.

No. 136. SATURDAY, JULY 6, 1751.

Ἐχθρὸς γάρ μοι κεινὸς ὁμως ἀϊδαο πύλῃσιν,
Ὅς χ' ἕτερον μὲν κεύθει ἐνὶ φρεσὶν, ἄλλο δὲ βάζει.

HOMER.

Who dares think one thing, and another tell,
My heart detests him as the gates of Hell. POPE.

THE regard which they whose abilities are employed in the works of imagination claim from the rest of mankind, arises in a great measure from their influence on futurity. Rank may be conferred by princes, and wealth bequeathed by misers or by robbers; but the honours of a lasting name, and the veneration of distant ages, only the sons of learning have the power of bestowing. While, therefore, it continues one of the characteristics of rational nature to decline oblivion, authors never can be wholly

overlooked in the search after happiness, nor become contemptible but by their own fault.

The man who considers himself as constituted the ultimate judge of disputable characters, and intrusted with the distribution of the last terrestrial rewards of merit, ought to summon all his fortitude to the support of his integrity, and resolve to discharge an office of such dignity with the most vigilant caution and scrupulous justice. To deliver examples to posterity, and to regulate the opinion of future times, is no slight or trivial undertaking; nor is it easy to commit more atrocious treason against the great republic of humanity, than by falsifying its records and misguiding its decrees.

To scatter praise or blame without regard to justice, is to destroy the distinction of good and evil. Many have no other test of actions than general opinion; and all are so far influenced by a sense of reputation, that they are often restrained by fear of reproach, and excited by hope of honour, when other principles have lost their power; nor can any species of prostitution promote general depravity more than that which destroys the force of praise, by showing that it may be acquired without deserving it, and which, by setting free the active and ambitious from the dread of infamy, lets loose the rapacity of power, and weakens the only authority by which greatness is controlled.

Praise, like gold and diamonds, owes its value only to its scarcity. It becomes cheap as it becomes vulgar, and will no longer raise expectation or animate enterprise. It is, therefore, not only necessary, that wickedness, even when it is not safe to censure it, be denied applause, but that goodness be commended only in proportion to its degree; and that the garlands, due to the great benefactors of mankind, be

not suffered to fade upon the brow of him who can boast only petty services and easy virtues.

Had these maxims been universally received, how much would have been added to the task of dedication, the work on which all the power of modern wit has been exhausted. How few of these initial panegyrics had appeared, if the author had been obliged first to find a man of virtue, then to distinguish the distinct species and degree of his desert, and at last to pay him only the honours which he might justly claim. It is much easier to learn the name of the last man whom change has exalted to wealth and power, to obtain, by the intervention of some of his domestics, the privilege of addressing him, or in confidence of the general acceptance of flattery, to venture on an address without any previous solicitation; and after having heaped upon him all the virtues to which philosophy has assigned a name, inform him how much more might be truly said, did not the fear of giving pain to his modesty repress the raptures of wonder and the zeal of veneration.

Nothing has so much degraded literature from its natural rank as the practice of indecent and promiscuous dedication; for what credit can he expect who professes himself the hireling of vanity, however profligate, and without shame or scruple celebrates the worthless, dignifies the mean, and gives to the corrupt, licentious, and oppressive, the ornaments which ought only to add grace to truth, and loveliness to innocence? Every other kind of adulteration, however shameful, however mischievous, is less detestable than the crime of counterfeiting characters, and fixing the stamp of literary sanction upon the dross and refuse of the world.

Yet I would not overwhelm the authors with the whole load of infamy, of which part, perhaps the

greater part, ought to fall upon their patrons. If he that hires a bravo, partakes the guilt of murder, why should he who bribes a flatterer, hope to be exempted from the shame of falsehood? The unhappy dedicator is seldom without some motives which obstruct, though not destroy, the liberty of choice; he is oppressed by miseries which he hopes to relieve, or inflamed by ambition which he expects to gratify. But the patron has no incitements equally violent; he can receive only a short gratification, with which nothing but stupidity could dispose him to be pleased. The real satisfaction which praise can afford is by repeating aloud the whispers of conscience, and by showing us that we have not endeavoured to deserve well in vain. Every other encomium is, to an intelligent mind, satire and reproach: the celebration of these virtues which we feel ourselves to want, can only impress a quicker sense of our defects, and show that we have not yet satisfied the expectations of the world, by forcing us to observe how much fiction must contribute to the completion of our character.

Yet sometimes the patron may claim indulgence; for it does not always happen, that the encomiast has been much encouraged to his attempt. Many a hapless author, when his book, and, perhaps, his dedication, was ready for the press, has waited long before any one would pay the price of prostitution, or consent to hear the praises destined to insure his name against the casualties of time; and many a complaint has been vented against the decline of learning, and neglect of genius, when either parsimonious prudence has declined expense, or honest indignation rejected falsehood. But if at last, after long inquiry and innumerable disappointments, he find a lord willing to hear of his own eloquence and

taste, a statesman desirous of knowing how a friendly historian will represent his conduct, or a lady delighted to leave to the world some memorial of her wit and beauty, such weakness cannot be censured as an instance of enormous depravity. The wisest man may, by a diligent solicitor, be surprised in the hour of weakness, and persuaded to solace vexation, or invigorate hope, with the music of flattery.

To censure all dedications as adulatory and servile, would discover rather envy than justice. Praise is the tribute of merit, and he that has incontestably distinguished himself by any public performance, has a right to all the honours which the public can bestow. To men thus raised above the rest of the community, there is no need that the book or its author should have any particular relation; that the patron is known to deserve respect, is sufficient to vindicate him that pays it. To the same regard from particular persons, private virtue, and less conspicuous excellence, may be sometimes entitled. An author may, with great propriety, inscribe his work to him by whose encouragement it was undertaken, or by whose liberality he has been enabled to prosecute it, and he may justly rejoice in his own fortitude that dares to rescue merit from obscurity.

> *Acribus exemplis videor te claudere, misce*
> *Ergo aliquid nostris de moribus.*— JUV. SAT. xiv. 322.
>
> Thus much I will indulge thee for thy ease,
> And mingle something of our times to please.
> DRYDEN.

I know not whether greater relaxation may not be indulged, and whether hope as well as gratitude may not unblamably produce a dedication; but let the writer who pours out his praises only to propi-

tiate power, or attract the attention of greatness, be cautious lest his desire betray him to exuberant eulogies. We are naturally more apt to please ourselves with the future than the past, and while we luxuriate in expectation, may be easily persuaded to purchase what we yet rate only by imagination, at a higher price than experience will warrant.

But no private views, or personal regard, can discharge any man from his general obligations to virtue and to truth. It may happen in the various combinations of life, that a good man may receive favours from one, who, notwithstanding his accidental beneficence, cannot be justly proposed to the imitation of others; and whom, therefore, he must find some other way of rewarding than by public celebrations. Self-love has, indeed, many powers of seducement, but it surely ought not to exalt any individual to equality with the collective body of mankind, or persuade him that a benefit conferred on him is equivalent to every other virtue. Yet many upon false principles of gratitude have ventured to extol wretches, whom all but their dependents numbered among the reproaches of the species; and whom they would likewise have beheld with the same scorn, had they not been hired to dishonest approbation.

To encourage merit with praise is the great business of literature; but praise must lose its influence, by unjust or negligent distribution; and he that impairs its value may be charged with misapplication of the power that genius puts into his hands, and with squandering on guilt the recompense of virtue.

No. 137. TUESDAY, JULY 9, 1751.

Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt.
HOR. SAT. i. 2. 24.

—Whilst fools one vice condemn,
They run into the opposite extreme. CREECH.

THAT wonder is the effect of ignorance, has been often observed. The awful stillness of attention, with which the mind is overspread at the first view of an unexpected effect, ceases when we have leisure to disentangle complications and investigate causes. Wonder is a pause of reason, a sudden cessation of the mental progress, which lasts only while the understanding is fixed upon some single idea; and is at an end when it recovers force to divide the object into its parts, or mark the intermediate gradations from the first agent to the last consequence.

It may be remarked, with equal truth, that ignorance is often the effect of wonder. It is common for those who have never accustomed themselves to the labour of inquiry, nor invigorated their confidence by conquests over difficulty, to sleep in the gloomy quiescence of astonishment, without any effort to animate inquiry or dispel obscurity. What they cannot immediately conceive, they consider as too high to be reached, or too extensive to be comprehended; they, therefore, content themselves with the gaze of folly, forbear to attempt what they have no hopes of performing; and resign the pleasure of

rational contemplation to more pertinacious study or more active faculties.

Among the productions of mechanic art, many are of a form so different from that of their first materials, and many consist of parts so numerous and so nicely adapted to each other, that it is not possible to view them without amazement. But when we enter the shops of artificers, observe the various tools by which every operation is facilitated, and trace the progress of a manufacture through the different hands, that, in succession to each other, contribute to its perfection, we soon discover that every single man has an easy task, and that the extremes, however remote, of natural rudeness and artificial elegance, are joined by a regular concatenation of effects, of which every one is introduced by that which precedes it, and equally introduces that which is to follow.

The same is the state of intellectual and manual performances. Long calculations or complex diagrams affright the timorous and unexperienced from a second view; but if we have skill sufficient to analyze them into simple principles, it will be discovered that our fear was groundless. Divide and conquer, is a principle equally just in science as in policy. Complication is a species of confederacy, which, while it continues united, bids defiance to the most active and vigorous intellect; but of which every member is separately weak, and which may, therefore, be quickly subdued if it can once be broken.

The chief art of learning, as Locke has observed, is to attempt but little at a time. The widest excursions of the mind are made by short flights frequently repeated; the most lofty fabrics of science are formed by the continued accumulation of single propositions.

It often happens, whatever be the cause, that impatience of labour, or dread of miscarriage, seizes those who are most distinguished for quickness of apprehension; and that they who might with greatest reason promise themselves victory, are least willing to hazard the encounter. This diffidence, where the attention is not laid asleep by laziness, or dissipated by pleasures, can arise only from confused and general views, such as negligence snatches in haste, or from the disappointment of the first hopes formed by arrogance without reflection. To expect that the intricacies of science will be pierced by a careless glance, or the eminences of fame ascended without labour, is to expect a peculiar privilege, a power denied to the rest of mankind; but to suppose that the maze is inscrutable to diligence, or the heights inaccessible to perseverance, is to submit tamely to the tyranny of fancy, and enchain the mind in voluntary shackles.

It is the proper ambition of the heroes in literature to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge by discovering and conquering new regions of the intellectual world. To the success of such undertakings, perhaps, some degree of fortuitous happiness is necessary, which no man can promise or procure to himself; and, therefore, doubt and irresolution may be forgiven in him that ventures into the unexplored abysses of truth, and attempts to find his way through the fluctuations of uncertainty and the conflicts of contradiction. But when nothing more is required, than to pursue a path already beaten, and to trample obstacles which others have demolished, why should any man so much distrust his own intellect as to imagine himself unequal to the attempt?

It were to be wished that they who devote their lives to study, would at once believe nothing too

great for their attainment, and consider nothing as too little for their regard; that they would extend their notice alike to science and to life, and unite some knowledge of the present world to their acquaintance with past ages and remote events.

Nothing has so much exposed men of learning to contempt and ridicule, as their ignorance of things which are known to all but themselves. Those who have been taught to consider the institutions of the schools as giving the last perfection to human abilities, are surprised to see men wrinkled with study, yet wanting to be instructed in the minute circumstance of propriety, or the necessary forms of daily transaction; and quickly shake off their reverence for modes of education, which they find to produce no ability above the rest of mankind.

'Books,' says Bacon, 'can never teach the use of books.' The student must learn by commerce with mankind to reduce his speculations to practice, and accommodate his knowledge to the purposes of life.

It is too common for those who have been bred to scholastic professions, and passed much of their time in academies where nothing but learning confers honours, to disregard every other qualification, and to imagine that they shall find mankind ready to pay homage to their knowledge, and to crowd about them for instruction. They, therefore, step out from their cells into the open world, with all the confidence of authority and dignity of importance; they look round about them, at once with ignorance and scorn, on a race of beings to whom they are equally unknown and equally contemptible, but whose manners they must imitate, and with whose opinions they must comply, if they desire to pass their time happily among them.

To lessen that disdain with which scholars are inclined to look on the common business of the world, and the unwillingness with which they condescend to learn what is not to be found in any system of philosophy, it may be necessary to consider, that though admiration is excited by abstruse researches and remote discoveries, yet pleasure is not given, nor affection conciliated, but by softer accomplishments, and qualities more easily communicable to those about us. He that can only converse upon questions, about which only a small part of mankind has knowledge sufficient to make them curious, must lose his days in unsocial silence, and live in the crowd of life without a companion. He that can only be useful on great occasions, may die without exerting his abilities, and stand a helpless spectator of a thousand vexations which fret away happiness, and which nothing is required to remove but a little dexterity of conduct and readiness of expedients.

No degree of knowledge attainable by man is able to set him above the want of hourly assistance, or to extinguish the desire of fond endearments and tender officiousness; and, therefore, no one should think it unnecessary to learn those arts by which friendship may be gained. Kindness is preserved by a constant reciprocation of benefits or interchange of pleasures; but such benefits only can be bestowed, as others are capable to receive, and such pleasures only imparted, as others are qualified to enjoy.

By this descent from the pinnacles of art no honour will be lost; for the condescensions of learning are always overpaid by gratitude. An elevated genius employed in little things, appears, to use the simile of Longinus, like the sun in his evening declination; he remits his splendour but retains his magnitude, and pleases more, though he dazzles less.

No. 138. SATURDAY, JULY 13, 1751.

O tantùm libeat mecum tibi sordida rura
Atque humiles habitare casas, et figere cervos.

VIRG. ECL. ii. 28.

With me retire, and leave the pomp of courts
For humble cottages and rural sports.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

"THOUGH the contempt with which you have treated the annual migrations of the gay and busy part of mankind, is justified by daily observation, since most of those who leave the town, neither vary their entertainments nor enlarge their notions; yet I suppose you do not intend to represent the practice itself as ridiculous, or to declare that he whose condition puts the distribution of his time into his own power may not properly divide it between the town and country.

"That the country, and only the country, displays the inexhaustible varieties of nature, and supplies the philosophical mind with matter for admiration and inquiry, never was denied; but my curiosity is very little attracted by the colour of a flower, the anatomy of an insect, or the structure of a nest; I am generally employed upon human manners, and, therefore, fill up the months of rural leisure with remarks on those who live within the circle of my notice. If writers would more frequently visit those regions of negligence and liberty, they might diversify their

representations, and multiply their images, for in the country are original characters chiefly to be found. In cities, and yet more in courts, the minute discriminations which distinguish one from another are for the most part effaced, the peculiarities of temper and opinion are gradually worn away by promiscuous converse; as angular bodies and uneven surfaces lose their points and asperities by frequent attrition against one another, and approach by degrees to uniform rotundity. The prevalence of fashion, the influence of example, the desire of applause, and the dread of censure, obstruct the natural tendencies of the mind, and check the fancy in its first efforts to break forth into experiments of caprice.

"Few inclinations are so strong as to grow up into habits, when they must struggle with the constant opposition of settled forms and established customs. But, in the country, every man is a separate and independent being; solitude flatters irregularity with hopes of secrecy; and wealth removed from the mortification of comparison and the awe of equality, swells into contemptuous confidence, and sets blame and laughter at defiance; the impulses of nature act unrestrained, and the disposition dares to show itself in its true form, without any disguise of hypocrisy or decorations of elegance. Every one indulges the full enjoyment of his own choice, and talks and lives with no other view than to please himself, without inquiring how far he deviates from the general practice, or considering others as entitled to any account of his sentiments or actions. If he builds or demolishes, opens or incloses, deluges or drains, it is not his care what may be the opinion of those who are skilled in perspective or architecture; it is sufficient that he has no

landlord to control him, and that none has any right to examine in what projects the lord of the manor spends his own money on his own grounds.

"For this reason it is not very common to want subjects for rural conversation. Almost every man is daily doing something which produces merriment, wonder, or resentment, among his neighbours. This utter exemption from restraint leaves every anomalous quality to operate in its full extent, and suffers the natural character to diffuse itself to every part of life. The pride which, under the check of public observation, would have been only vented among servants and domestics, becomes in a country baronet the torment of a province; and instead of terminating in the destruction of China ware and glasses, ruins tenants, dispossesses cottagers, and harasses villages with actions of trespass and bills of indictment.

"It frequently happens that even without violent passions, or enormous corruption, the freedom and laxity of a rustic life produces remarkable particularities of conduct or manner. In the province where I now reside, we have one lady eminent for wearing a gown always of the same cut and colour; another for shaking hands with those that visit her; and a third for unshaken resolution never to let tea or coffee enter her house.

"But of all the female characters which this place affords, I have found none so worthy of attention as that of Mrs. Busy, a widow, who lost her husband in her thirtieth year, and has since passed her time at the manor-house, in the government of her children, and the management of the estate.

"Mrs. Busy was married at eighteen, from a boarding-school where she had passed her time, like other young ladies, in needle-work, with a few inter-

vals of dancing and reading. When she became a bride, she spent one winter with her husband in town, where, having no idea of any conversation beyond the formalities of a visit, she found nothing to engage her passions; and when she had been one night at court, and two at an opera, and seen the Monument, the Tombs, and the Tower, she concluded that London had nothing more to show, and wondered that when women had once seen the world they could not be content to stay at home. She, therefore, went willingly to the ancient seat, and for some years studied housewifery under Mr. Busy's mother, with so much assiduity, that the old lady, when she died, bequeathed her a caudle-cup, a soup-dish, two beakers, and a chest of table-linen spun by herself.

"Mr. Busy finding the economical qualities of his lady, resigned his affairs wholly into her hands, and devoted his life to his pointers and his hounds. He never visited his estates, but to destroy the partridges or foxes; and often committed such devastations in the range of pleasure, that some of his tenants refused to hold their lands at the usual rent. Their landlady persuaded them to be satisfied, and entreated her husband to dismiss his dogs, with many exact calculations of the ale drank by his companions, and corn consumed by the horses, and remonstrances against the insolence of the huntsman, and the frauds of the groom. The huntsman was too necessary to his happiness to be discarded; and he had still continued to ravage his own estate, had he not caught a cold and a fever by shooting mallards in the fens. His fever was followed by a consumption, which in a few months brought him to the grave.

"Mrs. Busy was too much an economist to feel

either joy or sorrow at his death. She received the compliments and consolations of her neighbours in a dark room, out of which she stole privately every night and morning to see the cows milked; and after a few days declared that she thought a widow might employ herself better than in nursing grief; and that, for her part, she was resolved that the fortunes of her children should not be impaired by her neglect.

"She, therefore, immediately applied herself to the reformation of abuses. She gave away the dogs, discharged the servants of the kennel and stable, and sent the horses to the next fair, but rated at so high a price, that they returned unsold. She was resolved to have nothing idle about her, and ordered them to be employed in common drudgery. They lost their sleekness and grace, and were soon purchased at half the value.

"She soon disincumbered herself from her weeds, and put on a riding-hood, a coarse apron, and short petticoats, and has turned a large manor into a farm, of which she takes the management wholly upon herself. She rises before the sun to order the horses to their geers, and sees them well rubbed down at their return from work; she attends the dairy morning and evening, and watches when a calf falls that it may be carefully nursed; she walks out among the sheep at noon, counts the lambs, and observes the fences, and, where she finds a gap, stops it with a bush till it can be better mended. In harvest, she rides afield in the wagon, and is very liberal of her ale from a wooden bottle. At her leisure hours she looks goose eggs, airs the wool-room, and turns the cheese.

"When respect or curiosity brings visitants to her house, she entertains them with prognostics of a

scarcity of wheat, or a rot among the sheep; and always thinks herself privileged to dismiss them, when she is to see the hogs fed, or to count her poultry on the roost.

"The only things neglected about her are her children, whom she has taught nothing but the lowest household duties. In my last visit, I met Miss Busy carrying grains to a sick cow, and was entertained with the accomplishments of her eldest son, a youth of such early maturity, that though he is only sixteen, she can trust him to sell corn in the market. Her younger daughter, who is eminent for her beauty, though somewhat tanned in making hay, was busy in pouring out ale to the ploughmen, that every one might have an equal share.

"I could not but look with pity on this young family, doomed by the absurd prudence of their mother to ignorance and meanness; but when I recommended a more elegant education, was answered, that she never saw bookish or finical people grow rich, and that she was good for nothing herself till she had forgotten the nicety of the boarding-school.

"I am, yours, &c.,

"BUCOLUS."

No. 139. TUESDAY, JULY 16, 1751.

—Sit quid vis simplex duntaxat et unum.

HOR. ARS POET. 23.

Let every piece be simple and be one.

It is required by Aristotle to the perfection of a tragedy, and is equally necessary to every other species of regular composition, that it should have a beginning, a middle, and an end. "The beginning," says he, "is that which has nothing necessarily previous, but to which that which follows is naturally consequent; the end, on the contrary, is that which by necessity, or at least according to the common course of things, succeeds something else, but which implies nothing consequent to itself; the middle is connected on one side to something that naturally goes before, and on the other to something that naturally follows it."

Such is the rule laid down by this great critic, for the disposition of the different parts of a well-constituted fable. It must begin, where it may be made intelligible without introduction; and end, where the mind is left in repose, without expectation of any further event. The intermediate passages must join the last effect to the first cause, by a regular and unbroken concatenation; nothing must be, therefore, inserted which does not apparently arise from something foregoing, and properly make way for something that succeeds it.

This precept is to be understood in its rigour only

with respect to great and essential events, and cannot be extended in the same force to minuter circumstances and arbitrary decorations, which yet are more happy as they contribute more to the main design; for it is always a proof of extensive thought and accurate circumspection, to promote various purposes by the same act; and the idea of an ornament admits use, though it seems to exclude necessity.

Whoever purposes, as it is expressed by Milton, "to build the lofty rhyme," must acquaint himself with the law of poetical architecture, and take care that his edifice be solid as well as beautiful; that nothing stand single or independent, so as that it may be taken away without injuring the rest; but that, from the foundation to the pinnacles, one part rest firm upon another.

This regular and consequential distribution, is among common authors frequently neglected; but the failures of those, whose example can have no influence, may be safely overlooked, nor is it of much use to recall obscure and unregarded names to memory for the sake of sporting with their infamy. But if there is any writer whose genius can embellish impropriety, and whose authority can make error venerable, his works are the proper objects of critical inquisition. To expunge faults where there are no excellences, is a task equally useless with that of the chemist, who employs the arts of separation and refinement upon ore in which no precious metal is contained to reward his operations.

The tragedy of Samson Agonistes has been celebrated as the second work of the great author of Paradise Lost, and opposed with all the confidence of triumph to the dramatic performances of other nations. It contains, indeed, just sentiments, maxims

of wisdom, and oracles of piety, and many passages written with the ancient spirit of choral poetry, in which there is a just and pleasing mixture of Seneca's moral declamation, with the wild enthusiasm of the Greek writers. It is therefore worthy of examination, whether a performance thus illuminated with genius, and enriched with learning, is composed according to the indispensable laws of Aristotelian criticism: and, omitting at present all other considerations, whether it exhibits a beginning, a middle, and an end.

The beginning is undoubtedly beautiful and proper, opening with a graceful abruptness, and proceeding naturally to a mournful recital of facts necessary to be known: —

> *Samson.* A little onward lend thy guiding hand
> To these dark steps, a little further on;
> For yonder bank hath choice of sun or shade;
> There I am wont to sit when any chance
> Relieves me from my task of servile toil,
> Daily in the common prison else enjoin'd me.—
> O wherefore was my birth from Heaven foretold
> Twice by an angel?—
> Why was my breeding order'd and prescribed,
> As of a person separate to God,
> Design'd for great exploits; if I must die
> Betray'd, captived, and both my eyes put out?—
> Whom have I to complain of but myself?
> Who this high gift of strength, committed to me,
> In what part lodged, how easily bereft me,
> Under the seat of silence could not keep,
> But weakly to a woman must reveal it. Line 1, &c.

His soliloquy is interrupted by a chorus or company of men of his own tribe, who condole his miseries, extenuate his fault, and conclude with a solemn vindication of divine justice. So that at the conclusion of the first act there is no design laid, no discovery made, nor any disposition formed towards the subsequent event.

In the second act, Manoah, the father of Samson, comes to seek his son, and, being shown him by the chorus, breaks out into lamentations of his misery, and comparisons of his present with his former state, representing to him the ignominy which his religion suffers by the festival this day celebrated in honour of Dagon, to whom the idolaters ascribed his overthrow: —

> —Thou bear'st
> Enough, and more, the burden of that fault;
> Bitterly hast thou paid and still art paying
> That rigid score. A worse thing yet remains,
> This day the Philistines a pop'lar feast
> Here celebrate in Gaza; and proclaim
> Great pomp and sacrifice, and praises loud
> To Dagon, as their God, who hath deliver'd
> Thee, Samson, bound and blind into their hands,
> Them out of thine, who slew'st them many a slain.
> Line 430.

Samson, touched with this reproach, makes a reply equally penitential and pious, which his father considers as the effusion of prophetic confidence: —

> *Samson.* —God, be sure,
> Will not connive or linger thus provoked,
> But will arise, and his great name assert.
> Dagon must stoop, and shall ere long receive
> Such a discomfit, as shall quite despoil him
> Of all these boasted trophies won on me. Line 465.

> *Manoah.* With cause this hope relieves thee, and these words
> I as a prophecy receive; for God,
> Nothing more certain, will not long defer
> To vindicate the glory of his name. Line 472.

This part of the dialogue, as it might tend to animate or exasperate Samson, cannot, I think, be censured as wholly superfluous; but the succeeding dispute, in which Samson contends to die, and which his father breaks off, that he may go to solicit his

release, is only valuable for its own beauties, and has no tendency to introduce any thing that follows it.

The next event of the drama is the arrival of Dalilah, with all her graces, artifices, and allurements. This produces a dialogue, in a very high degree elegant and instructive, from which she retires, after she has exhausted her persuasions, and is no more seen nor heard of; nor has her visit any effect but that of raising the character of Samson.

In the fourth act enters Harapha, the giant of Gath, whose name had never been mentioned before, and who has now no other motive of coming, than to see the man whose strength and actions are so loudly celebrated: —

> *Harapha.* —Much I have heard
> Of thy prodigious might, and feats perform'd
> Incredible to me; in this displeased,
> That I was never present in the place
> Of those encounters, where we might have tried
> Each other's force in camp of listed field:
> And now am come to see of whom such noise
> Hath walk'd about, and each limb to survey,
> If thy appearance answer loud report. Line 1082.

Samson challenges him to the combat; and, after an interchange of reproaches, elevated by repeated defiance on one side, and imbittered by contemptuous insults on the other, Harapha retires; we then hear it determined, by Samson and the chorus, that no consequence, good or bad, will proceed from their interview: —

> *Chorus.* He will directly to the lords, I fear,
> And with malicious counsel stir them up
> Some way or other further to afflict thee. Line 1250.

> *Samson.* He must allege some cause, and offer'd fight
> Will not dare mention, lest a question rise,

Whether he durst accept th' offer or not;
And that he durst not, plain enough appear'd.
Line 1253.

At last, in the fifth act, appears a messenger from the lords assembled at the festival of Dagon, with a summons, by which Samson is required to come and entertain them with some proof of his strength. Samson, after a short expostulation, dismisses him with a firm and resolute refusal; but during the absence of the messenger, having a while defended the propriety of his conduct, he at last declares himself moved by a secret impulse to comply, and utters some dark presages of a great event to be brought to pass by his agency, under the direction of Providence: —

Samson. Be of good courage; I begin to feel
Some rousing motions in me, which dispose
To something extraordinary my thoughts.
I with this messenger will go along,
Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonour
Our law, or strain my vow of Nazarite.
If there be ought of presage in the mind,
This day will be remarkable in my life
By some great act, or of my days the last.
Line 1381.

While Samson is conducted off by the messenger, his father returns with hopes of success in his solicitation, upon which he confers with the chorus till their dialogue is interrupted, first by a shout of triumph, and afterwards by screams of horror and agony. As they stand deliberating where they shall be secure, a man who has been present at the show enters, and relates how Samson, having prevailed on his guide to suffer him to lean against the main pillars of the theatrical edifice, tore down the roof upon the spectators and himself: —

—Those two massy pillars,
With horrible convulsion, to and fro,
He tugged, he shook, till down they came, and drew
The whole roof after them, with burst of thunder,
Upon the heads of all who sat beneath.—
—Samson with these immixt, inevitably
Pull'd down the same destruction on himself.

Line 1648.

This is undoubtedly a just and regular catastrophe, and the poem, therefore, has a beginning and an end which Aristotle himself could not have disapproved; but it must be allowed to want a middle, since nothing passes between the first act and the last, that either hastens or delays the death of Samson. The whole drama, if its superfluities were cut off, would scarcely fill a single act; yet this is the tragedy which ignorance has admired, and bigotry applauded.

No. 140. SATURDAY, JULY 20, 1751.

—Quis tam Lucili fautor inepte est,
Ut non hoc fateatur.— HOR. SAT. i. 10. 2.

What doting bigot, to his faults so blind,
As not to grant me this, can *Milton* find?

It is common, says Bacon, to desire the end without enduring the means. Every member of society feels and acknowledges the necessity of detecting crimes, yet scarce any degree of virtue or reputation is able to secure an informer from public hatred. The learned world has always admitted the useful-

ness of critical disquisitions, yet he that attempts to show, however modestly, the failures of a celebrated writer, shall surely irritate his admirers, and incur the imputation of envy, captiousness, and malignity.

With this danger full in my view, I shall proceed to examine the sentiments of Milton's tragedy, which, though much less liable to censure than the disposition of his plan, are, like those of other writers, sometimes exposed to just exception for want of care, or want of discernment.

Sentiments are proper and improper as they consist more or less with the character and circumstances of the person to whom they are attributed, with the rules of the composition in which they are found, or with the settled and unalterable nature of things.

It is common among the tragic poets to introduce their persons alluding to events or opinions, of which they could not possibly have any knowledge. The barbarians of remote or newly discovered regions often display their skill in European learning. The god of love is mentioned in Tamerlane, with all the familiarity of a Roman epigrammatist; and a late writer has put Harvey's doctrine of the circulation of the blood into the mouth of a Turkish statesman, who lived near two centuries before it was known even to philosophers or anatomists.

Milton's learning, which acquainted him with the manners of the ancient eastern nations, and his invention, which required no assistance from the common cant of poetry, have preserved him from frequent outrages of local or chronological propriety. Yet he has mentioned Chalybean steel, of which it is not very likely that his chorus should have heard, and has made Alp the general name of a mountain, in a region where the Alps could scarcely be known: —

> Or medicinal liquor can assuage,
> Nor breath of vernal air from snowy Alp. Line 627.

He has taught Samson the tales of Circe and the Syrens, at which he apparently hints in his colloquy with Dalilah: —

> —I know thy trains,
> Though dearly to my cost, thy gins, and toils;
> Thy fair enchanted cup, and warbling charms,
> No more on me have power. Line 932.

But the grossest error of this kind is the solemn introduction of the phœnix in the last scene; which is faulty, not only as it is incongruous to the personage to whom it is ascribed, but as it is so evidently contrary to reason and nature, that it ought never to be mentioned but as a fable in any serious poem: —

> —Virtue given for lost,
> Deprest, and overthrown, as seemed,
> Like that self begotten bird
> In the Arabian woods emboss'd,
> That no second knows, nor third,
> And lay ere while a holocaust;
> From out her ashy womb now teem'd
> Revives, reflourishes, then vigorous most
> When most unactive deemed,
> And though her body die, her fame survives,
> A secular bird, ages of lives. Line 1697.

Another species of impropriety, is the unsuitableness of thoughts to the general character of the poem. The seriousness and solemnity of tragedy necessarily rejects all pointed or epigrammatical expressions, all remote conceits and opposition of ideas. Samson's complaint is therefore too elaborate to be natural: —

> As in the land of darkness, yet in light,
> To live a life half dead, a living death,
> And buried; but O yet more miserable!

Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave!
Buried, yet not exempt,
By privilege of death and burial,
From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs.
Line 99.

"All allusions to low and trivial objects, with which contempt is usually associated, are doubtless unsuitable to a species of composition which ought to be always awful, though not always magnificent. The remark therefore of the chorus, on good and bad news, seems to want elevation: —

Manoah. A little stay will bring some notice hither.
Chor. Of good or bad so great, of bad the sooner;
For evil news rides post, while good news baits.
Line 1536.

But of all meanness, that has least to plead which is produced by mere verbal conceits, which, depending only upon sounds, lose their existence by the change of a syllable. Of this kind is the following dialogue: —

Chor. But had we best retire? I see a storm.
Sams. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain.
Chor. But this another kind of tempest brings.
Sams. Be less abstruse, my riddling days are past.
Chor. Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear
The bait of honeyed words; a rougher tongue
Draws hitherward, I know him by his stride,
The giant Harapha.— Line 1061.

And yet more despicable are the lines in which Manoah's paternal kindness is commended by the chorus: —

Fathers are wont to lay up for their sons,
Thou for thy son art bent to lay out all.—
Line 1485.

Samson's complaint of the inconveniences of imprisonment is not wholly without verbal quaintness: —

—I a prisoner chain'd, scarce freely draw
The air, imprison'd also, close and damp. Line 7.

From the sentiments we may properly descend to the consideration of the language, which, in imitation of the ancients, is through the whole dialogue remarkably simple and unadorned, seldom heightened by epithets, or varied by figures; yet sometimes metaphors find admission, even where their consistency is not accurately preserved. Thus Samson confounds loquacity with a shipwreck: —

How could I once look up, or heave the head,
Who, like a foolish pilot, have shipwreck'd
My vessel, trusted to me from above,
Gloriously rigg'd; and for a word, a tear,
Fool, have divulged the secret gift of God,
To a deceitful woman?— Line 197.

And the chorus talks of adding fuel to flame in a report: —

He 's gone, and who knows how he may report
Thy words, by adding fuel to the flame? Line 1350.

The versification is in the dialogue much more smooth and harmonious than in the parts allotted to the chorus, which are often so harsh and dissonant, as scarce to preserve, whether the lines end with or without rhymes, any appearance of metrical regularity: —

Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be he,
That heroic, that renowned,
Irresistible Samson: whom unarm'd,
No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast, could withstand.
Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid?
Line 124.

Since I have thus pointed out the faults of Milton, critical integrity requires that I should endeavour to

display his excellences, though they will not easily be discovered in short quotations, because they consist in the justness of diffuse reasonings, or in the contexture and method of continued dialogues; this play having none of those descriptions, similes, or splendid sentences, with which other tragedies are so slavishly adorned.

Yet some passages may be selected which seem to deserve particular notice, either as containing sentiments of passion, representations of life, precepts of conduct, or sallies of imagination. It is not easy to give a stronger representation of the weariness of despondency, than in the words of Samson to his father: —

> —I feel my genial spirits droop,
> My hopes all flat; nature within me seems
> In all her functions weary of herself;
> My race of glory run, and race of shame;
> And I shall shortly be with them that rest.
>
> Line 594.

The reply of Samson to the flattering Dalilah, affords a just and striking description of the stratagems and allurements of feminine hypocrisy: —

> —These are thy wonted arts,
> And arts of every woman false like thee,
> To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray;
> Then as repentant to submit, beseech,
> And reconcilement move with feign'd remorse,
> Confess and promise wonders in her change;
> Not truly penitent, but chief to try
> Her husband, how far urged his patience bears,
> His virtue or weakness which way to assail:
> Then with more cautious and instructed skill
> Again transgresses, and again submits. Line 748.

When Samson has refused to make himself a spectacle at the feast of Dagon, he first justifies his behaviour to the chorus, who charge him with hav-

ing served the Philistines, by a very just distinction; and then destroys the common excuse of cowardice and servility, which always confound temptation with compulsion: —

> *Chor.* Yet with thy strength thou servest the Philistines.
> *Sams.* Not in their idol worship, but by labour
> Honest and lawful, to deserve my food
> Of those who have me in their civil power.
> *Chor.* Where the heart joins not, outward acts defile not.
> *Sams.* Where outward force constrains, the sentence holds,
> But who constrains me to the temple of Dagon,
> Not dragging? the Philistian lords command.
> Commands are no constraints. If I obey them,
> I do it freely, vent'ring to displease
> God for the fear of man, and man prefer,
> Set God behind.— Line 1363.

The complaint of blindness which Samson pours out at the beginning of the tragedy is equally addressed to the passions and the fancy. The enumerations of his miseries is succeeded by a very pleasing train of poetical images, and concluded by such expostulations and wishes, as reason too often submits to learn from despair: —

> O first created beam, and thou great word
> Let there be light, and light was over all;
> Why am I thus bereaved thy prime decree?
> The sun to me is dark,
> And silent as the moon,
> When she deserts the night,
> Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.
> Since light so necessary is to life,
> And almost life itself: if it be true,
> That light is in the soul,
> She all in every part: why was the sight
> To such a tender ball as th' eye confined,
> So obvious and so easy to be quench'd?
> And not, as feeling, through all parts diffused,
> That she may look at will through every pore?
> Line 83.

Such are the faults and such the beauties of Samson Agonistes, which I have shown with no other purpose than to promote the knowledge of true criticism. The everlasting verdure of Milton's laurels has nothing to fear from the blasts of malignity; nor can my attempt produce any other effect, than to strengthen their shoots by lopping their luxuriance.

No. 141. TUESDAY, JULY 23, 1751.

Hilarisque, tamen cum pondere, virtus. STAT.

Greatness with ease and gay severity.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

"POLITICIANS have long observed, that the greatest events may be often traced back to slender causes. Petty competition or casual friendship, the prudence of a slave, or the garrulity of a woman, have hindered or promoted the most important schemes, and hastened or retarded the revolutions of empire.

"Whoever shall review his life will generally find, that the whole tenor of his conduct has been determined by some accident of no apparent moment, or by a combination of inconsiderable circumstances, acting when his imagination was unoccupied, and his judgment unsettled: and that his principles and

actions have taken their colour from some secret infusion, mingled without design in the current of his ideas. The desires that predominate in our hearts, are instilled by imperceptible communications at the time when we look upon the various scenes of the world, and the different employments of men, with the neutrality of inexperience; and we come forth from the nursery or the school, invariably destined to the pursuit of great acquisitions or petty accomplishments.

"Such was the impulse by which I have been kept in motion from my earliest years. I was born to an inheritance which gave my childhood a claim to distinction and caresses, and was accustomed to hear applauses, before they had much influence on my thoughts. The first praise of which I remember myself sensible was that of good-humour, which, whether I deserved it or not when it was bestowed, I have since made it my whole business to propagate and maintain.

"When I was sent to school, the gayety of my look, and the liveliness of my loquacity, soon gained me admission to hearts not yet fortified against affection by artifice or interest. I was intrusted with every stratagem, and associated in every sport; my company gave alacrity to a frolic, and gladness to a holiday. I was, indeed, so much employed in adjusting or executing schemes of diversion, that I had no leisure for my task, but was furnished with exercises, and instructed in my lessons, by some kind patron of the higher classes. My master, not suspecting my deficiency, or unwilling to detect what his kindness would not punish nor his impartiality excuse, allowed me to escape with a slight examination, laughed at the pertness of my ignorance and the sprightliness of my absurdities, and could not

forbear to show that he regarded me with such tenderness, as genius and learning can seldom excite.

"From school I was dismissed to the university, where I soon drew upon me the notice of the younger students, and was the constant partner of their morning walks and evening compotations. I was not, indeed, much celebrated for literature, but was looked on with indulgence as a man of parts, who wanted nothing but the dulness of a scholar, and might become eminent whenever he should condescend to labour and attention. My tutor a while reproached me with negligence, and repressed my sallies with supercilious gravity; yet having natural good-humour lurking in his heart, he could not long hold out against the power of hilarity, but after a few months began to relax the muscles of disciplinarian moroseness, received me with smiles after an elopement, and, that he might not betray his trust to his fondness, was content to spare my diligence by increasing his own.

"Thus I continued to dissipate the gloom of collegiate austerity, to waste my own life in idleness, and lure others from their studies, till the happy hour arrived when I was sent to London. I soon discovered the town to be the proper element of youth and gayety, and was quickly distinguished as a wit by the ladies, a species of beings only heard of at the university, whom I had no sooner the happiness of approaching, than I devoted all my faculties to the ambition of pleasing them.

"A wit, Mr. Rambler, in the dialect of ladies, is not always a man, who, by the action of a vigorous fancy upon comprehensive knowledge, brings distant ideas unexpectedly together, who by some peculiar acuteness, discovers resemblances in objects dissimilar to common eyes, or by mixing heterogeneous

notions, dazzles the attention with sudden scintillations of conceit. A lady's wit is a man who can make ladies laugh, to which, however easy it may seem, many gifts of nature, and attainments of art, must commonly concur. He that hopes to be conceived as a wit in female assemblies, should have a form neither so amiable as to strike with admiration, nor so coarse as to raise disgust, with an understanding too feeble to be dreaded, and too forcible to be despised. The other parts of the character are more subject to variation; it was formerly essential to a wit, that half his back should be covered with a snowy fleece, and, at a time yet more remote, no man was a wit without his boots. In the days of The Spectator, a snuffbox seems to have been indispensable; but in my time an embroidered coat was sufficient, without any precise regulation of the rest of his dress.

"But wigs, and boots, and snuffboxes are vain without a perpetual resolution to be merry, and who can always find supplies of mirth! Juvenal, indeed, in his comparison of the two opposite philosophers, wonders only whence an unexhausted fountain of tears could be discharged; but had Juvenal, with all his spirit, undertaken my province, he would have found constant gayety equally difficult to be supported. Consider, Mr. Rambler, and compassionate the condition of a man, who has taught every company to expect from him a continual feast of laughter, an unintermitted stream of jocularity. The task of every other slave has an end. The rower, in time, reaches the port; the lexicographer at last finds the conclusion of his alphabet; only the hapless wit has his labour always to begin, the call for novelty is never satisfied, and one jest only raises expectation of another.

"I know that among men of learning and asperity, the retainers to the female world are not much regarded, yet I cannot but hope that if you knew at how dear a rate our honours are purchased, you would look with some gratulation on our success, and with some pity on our miscarriages. Think on the misery of him who is condemned to cultivate barrenness and ransack vacuity; who is obliged to continue his talk when his meaning is spent, to raise merriment without images, to harass his imagination in quest of thoughts which he cannot start, and his memory in pursuit of narratives which he cannot overtake; observe the effort with which he strains to conceal despondency by a smile, and the distress in which he sits while the eyes of the company are fixed upon him as their last refuge from silence and dejection.

"It were endless to recount the shifts to which I have been reduced, or to enumerate the different species of artificial wit. I regularly frequented coffee-houses, and have often lived a week upon an expression of which he who dropped it did not know the value. When fortune did not favour my erratic industry, I gleaned jests at home from obsolete farces. To collect wit was, indeed, safe, for I consorted with none that looked much into books, but to disperse it was the difficulty. A seeming negligence was often useful, and I have very successfully made a reply not to what the lady had said, but to what it was convenient for me to hear; for very few were so perverse as to rectify a mistake which had given occasion to a burst of merriment. Sometimes I drew the conversation up by degrees to a proper point, and produced a conceit which I had treasured up, like sportsmen who boast of killing the foxes which they lodge in the covert. Eminence is, however, in

some happy moments, gained at less expense; I have delighted a whole circle at one time with a series of quibbles, and made myself good company at another, by scalding my fingers, or mistaking a lady's lap for my own chair.

"These are artful deceits and useful expedients; but expedients are at length exhausted, and deceits detected. Time itself, among other injuries, diminishes the power of pleasing, and I now find in my forty-fifth year many pranks and pleasantries very coldly received, which had formerly filled a whole room with jollity and acclamation. I am under the melancholy necessity of supporting that character by study, which I gained by levity, having learned too late that gayety must be recommended by higher qualities, and that mirth can never please long but as the efflorescence of a mind loved for its luxuriance, but esteemed for its usefulness.

"I am, &c.,

"PAPILIUS."

No. 142. SATURDAY, JULY 27, 1751.

Ἔνθα δ' ἀνὴρ ἐνίαυε πελώριος —— οὐδὲ, μετ' ἄλλους
Πωλεῖτ', ἀλλ' ἀπανευθεν ἐὼν ἀθεμίστια ᾔδη.
Καὶ γὰρ θαῦμ' ἐτέτυκτο πελώριον· οὐδὲ ἐώκει
Ἀνδρίγε σιτοφάγῳ.—

HOMER. ODYSS. I. 187, *et seq.*

A giant shepherd here his flock maintains
Far from the rest, and solitary reigns,
In shelter thick of horrid shade reclined;
And gloomy mischiefs labour in his mind.
A form enormous! far unlike the race
Of human birth, in stature or in face. POPE.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

"HAVING been accustomed to retire annually from the town, I lately accepted the invitation of Eugenio, who has an estate and seat in a distant county. As we were unwilling to travel without improvement, we turned often from the direct road to please ourselves with the view of nature or of art; we examined every wild mountain and medicinal spring, criticized every edifice, contemplated every ruin, and compared every scene of action with the narratives of historians. By this succession of amusements, we enjoyed the exercise of a journey without suffering the fatigue, and had nothing to regret but that, by a progress so leisurely and gentle, we missed the adventures of a postchaise, and the pleasure of alarming villages with the tumult of

our passage, and of disguising our insignificancy by the dignity of hurry.

"The first week after our arrival at Eugenio's house was passed in receiving visits from his neighbours, who crowded about him with all the eagerness of benevolence: some impatient to learn the news of the court and town, that they might be qualified, by authentic information, to dictate to the rural politicians on the next bowling day; others, desirous of his interest to accommodate disputes, or of his advice in the settlement of their fortunes and the marriage of their children.

"The civilities which he had received were soon to be returned; and I passed some time with great satisfaction in roving through the country, and viewing the seats, gardens, and plantations, which are scattered over it. My pleasure would, indeed, have been greater had I been sometimes allowed to wander in a park or wilderness alone, but to appear as the friend of Eugenio was an honour not to be enjoyed without some inconveniences; so much was every one solicitous for my regard, that I could seldom escape to solitude, or steal a moment from the emulation of complaisance and the vigilance of officiousness.

"In these rambles of good neighbourhood, we frequently passed by a house of unusual magnificence. While I had my curiosity yet distracted among many novelties, it did not much attract my observation; but in a short time I could not forbear surveying it with particular notice; but, for the length of the wall which inclosed the gardens, the disposition of the shades that waved over it, and the canals, of which I could obtain some glimpses through the trees from our own windows, gave me reason to expect more grandeur and beauty than I had yet seen in that

province. I therefore inquired, as we rode by it, why we never, amongst our excursions, spent an hour where there was such an appearance of splendor and affluence. Eugenio told me that the seat which I so much admired, was commonly called in the country the haunted house, and that no visits were paid there by any of the gentlemen whom I had yet seen. As the haunts of incorporeal beings are generally ruinous, neglected, and desolate, I easily conceived that there was something to be explained, and told him that I supposed it only fairy ground, on which we might venture by daylight without danger. 'The danger,' says he, 'is indeed only that of appearing to solicit the acquaintance of a man, with whom it is not possible to converse without infamy, and who has driven from him, by his insolence or malignity, every human being who can live without him.'

"Our conversation was then accidentally interrupted; but my inquisitive humour being now in motion, could not rest without a full account of this newly discovered prodigy. I was soon informed that the fine house and spacious gardens were haunted by Squire Bluster, of whom it was very easy to learn the character, since nobody had regard for him sufficient to hinder them from telling whatever they could discover.

"Squire Bluster is descended of an ancient family. The estate which his ancestors had immemorially possessed was much augmented by Captain Bluster, who served under Drake, in the reign of Elizabeth; and the Blusters, who were before only petty gentlemen, have from that time frequently represented the shire in parliament, been chosen to present addresses, and given laws at hunting matches and races. They were eminently hospitable and popular, till

the father of this gentleman died of an election. His lady went to the grave soon after him, and left the heir, then only ten years old, to the care of his grandmother, who would not suffer him to be controlled, because she could not bear to hear him cry; and never sent him to school, because she was not able to live without his company. She taught him however very early to inspect the steward's account, to dog the butler from the cellar, and to catch the servants at a junket; so that he was, at the age of eighteen, a complete master of all the lower arts of domestic policy, had often, on the road, detected combinations between the coachman and the ostler, and procured the discharge of nineteen maids for illicit correspondence with cottagers and charwomen.

"By the opportunities of parsimony which minority affords, and which the probity of his guardians had diligently improved, a very large sum of money was accumulated, and he found himself, when he took his affairs into his own hands, the richest man in the country. It has been long the custom of this family to celebrate the heir's completion of his twenty-first year, by an entertainment at which the house is thrown open to all that are inclined to enter it, and the whole province flocks together as to a general festivity. On this occasion young Bluster exhibited the first tokens of his future eminence, by shaking his purse at an old gentleman, who had been the intimate friend of his father, and offering to wager a greater sum than he could afford to venture; a practice with which he has, at one time or other, insulted every freeholder within ten miles around him.

"His next acts of offence were committed in a contentious and spiteful vindication of the privileges

of his manors, and a rigorous and relentless prosecution of every man that presumed to violate his game. As he happens to have no estate adjoining equal to his own, his oppressions are often borne without resistance, for fear of a long suit, of which he delights to count the expenses, without the least solicitude about the event; for he knows, that where nothing but an honorary right is contested, the poorer antagonist must always suffer, whatever shall be the last decision of the law.

"By the success of some of these disputes, he has so elated his insolence, and, by reflection upon the general hatred which they have brought upon him, so irritated his virulence, that his whole life is spent in meditating or executing mischief. It is his common practice to procure his hedges to be broken in the night, and then to demand satisfaction for damages which his grounds have suffered from his neighbour's cattle. An old widow was yesterday soliciting Eugenio to enable her to replevin her only cow, then in the pound by Squire Bluster's order, who had sent one of his agents to take advantage of her calamity, and persuade her to sell the cow at an under-rate. He has driven a day-labourer from his cottage, for gathering blackberries in a hedge, for his children; and has now an old woman in the county-jail for a trespass which she committed, by coming into his grounds to pick up acorns for her hog.

"Money, in whatever hands, will confer power. Distress will fly to immediate refuge, without much consideration of remote consequences. Bluster has, therefore, a despotic authority in many families, whom he has assisted, on pressing occasions, with larger sums than they can easily repay. The only visits that he makes are to these houses of misfortune, where he enters with the insolence of absolute

command, enjoys the terrors of the family, exacts their obedience, riots at their charge, and in the height of his joy insults the father with menaces, and the daughters with obscenity.

He is, of late, somewhat less offensive; for one of his debtors, after gentle expostulations, by which he was only irritated to grosser outrage, seized him by the sleeve, led him trembling into the court-yard, and closed the door upon him in a stormy night. He took his usual revenge next morning by a writ; but the debt was discharged by the assistance of Eugenio.

"It is his rule to suffer his tenants to owe him rent, because, by this indulgence, he secures to himself the power of seizure whenever he has an inclination to amuse himself with calamity, and feast his ears with entreaties and lamentations. Yet, as he is sometimes capriciously liberal to those whom he happens to adopt as favourites, and lets his land at a cheap rate, his farms are never long unoccupied; and when one is ruined by oppression, the possibility of better fortune quickly lures another to supply his place.

"Such is the life of Squire Bluster; a man in whose power fortune has liberally placed the means of happiness, but who has defeated all her gifts of their end by the depravity of his mind. He is wealthy without followers; he is magnificent without witnesses; he has birth without alliance; and influence without dignity. His neighbours scorn him as a brute; his dependents dread him as an oppressor; and he has only the gloomy comfort of reflecting, that if he is hated, he is likewise feared.

"I am, Sir, &c.,
"VAGULUS."

No. 143. TUESDAY, JULY 30, 1751.

—Moveat cornicula risum
Furtivis nudata coloribus.— HOR. EPIST. i. 3. 19.

Lest when the birds their various colours claim,
Stripp'd of his stolen pride, the crow forlorn
Should stand the laughter of the public scorn.
FRANCIS.

AMONG the innumerable practices by which interest or envy have taught those who live upon literary fame to disturb each other at their airy banquets, one of the most common is the charge of plagiarism. When the excellence of a new composition can no longer be contested, and malice is compelled to give way to the unanimity of applause, there is yet this one expedient to be tried, by which the author may be degraded, though his work be reverenced; and the excellence which we cannot obscure, may be set at such a distance as not to overpower our fainter lustre.

This accusation is dangerous, because, even when it is false, it may be sometimes urged with probability. Bruyere declares, that we are come into the world too late to produce any thing new, that nature and life are preoccupied, and that description and sentiment have been long exhausted. It is, indeed, certain, that whoever attempts any common topic, will find unexpected coincidences of his thoughts with those of other writers; nor can the nicest judgment always distinguish accidental similitude from artful imitation. There is, likewise, a common

stock of images, a settled mode of arrangement, and a beaten track of transition, which all authors suppose themselves at liberty to use, and which produce the resemblance generally observable among contemporaries. So that in books which best deserve the name of originals, there is little new beyond the disposition of materials already provided; the same ideas and combinations of ideas have been long in the possession of other hands, and by restoring to every man his own, as the Romans must have returned to their cots from the possession of the world, so the most inventive and fertile genius would reduce his folios to a few pages. Yet the author who imitates his predecessors only by furnishing himself with thoughts and elegances out of the same general magazine of literature, can with little more propriety be reproached as a plagiary, than the architect can be censured as a mean copier of Angelo or Wren, because he digs his marble out of the same quarry, squares his stones by the same art, and unites them in columns of the same orders.

Many subjects fall under the consideration of an author, which, being limited by nature, can admit only of slight and accidental diversities. All definitions of the same thing must be nearly the same; and descriptions, which are definitions of a more lax and fanciful kind, must always have, in some degree, that resemblance to each other which they all have to their object. Different poets describing the spring or the sea would mention the zephyrs and the flowers, the billows and the rocks; reflecting on human life, they would, without any communication of opinions, lament the deceitfulness of hope, the fugacity of pleasure, the fragility of beauty, and the frequency of calamity; and for palliatives of these incurable

miseries, they would concur in recommending kindness, temperance, caution, and fortitude.

When, therefore, there are found in Virgil and Horace, two similar passages,

> *Hæ tibi erunt artes—*
> *Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.—*
> VIRG. ÆN. vi. 852.

> To tame the proud, the fetter'd slave to free:
> These are imperial arts, and worthy thee.
> DRYDEN.

> *Imperet bellante prior, jacentem*
> *Lenis in hostem.* HOR. CAR. SÆC. 51.

> Let Cæsar spread his conquests far,
> Less pleased to triumph than to spare.

it is surely not necessary to suppose, with a late critic, that one is copied from the other, since neither Virgil nor Horace can be supposed ignorant of the common duties of humanity, and the virtue of moderation in success.

Cicero and Ovid have, on very different occasions remarked how little of the honour of a victory belongs to the general, when his soldiers and his fortune have made their deductions; yet why should Ovid be suspected to have owed to Tully an observation which, perhaps, occurs to every man that sees or hears of military glories?

Tully observes of Achilles, that had not Homer written, his valour had been without praise: *Nisi Ilias illa extitisset, idem tumulus qui corpus ejus contexerat, nomen ejus obruisset.* 'Unless the Iliad had been published, his name had been lost in the tomb that covered his body.'

Horace tells us, with more energy, that there were brave men before the wars of Troy, but they were lost in oblivion, for want of a poet:—

Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi; sed omnes illachrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longâ
Nocte, carent quia vate sacro. CAR. iv. 9. 25.

Before great Agamemnon reign'd,
Reign'd kings as great as he, and brave,
Whose huge ambition 's now contain'd
In the small compass of a grave:
In endless night they sleep, unwept, unknown:
No bard had they to make all time their own.
FRANCIS.

Tully inquires, in the same oration, why, but for fame, we disturb a short life with so many fatigues? *Quid est quod in hoc tam exiguo vitæ curriculo et tam brevi, tantis nos in laboribus exerceamus.* 'Why in so small a circuit of life should we employ ourselves in so many fatigues?'

Horace inquires in the same manner,

Quid brevi fortes jaculamur ævo
Multa?— CAR. ii. 16. 17.

Why do we aim, with eager strife,
At things beyond the mark of life? FRANCIS.

when our life is of so short duration, why we form such numerous designs? But Horace, as well as Tully, might discover that records are needful to preserve the memory of actions, and that no records were so durable as poems; either of them might find out that life is short, and that we consume it in unnecessary labour.

There are other flowers of fiction so widely scattered and so easily cropped, that it is scarcely just to tax the use of them as an act by which any particular writer is despoiled of his garland; for they may be said to have been planted by the ancients in the open road of poetry for the accommodation of their successors, and to be the right of every one

that has art to pluck them without injuring their colours or their fragrance. The passage of Orpheus to hell, with the recovery and second loss of Eurydice, have been described after Boethius, by Pope, in such a manner as might justly leave him suspected of imitation, were not the images such as they might both have derived from more ancient writers.

Quæ sontes agitant metu
Ultrices scelerum deæ
Jam mœstæ lacrhymis madent,
Non Ixionium caput
Velox præcipitat rota.

The powers of vengeance, while they hear,
Touch'd with compassion, drop a tear;
Ixion's rapid wheel is bound,
Fix'd in attention to the sound. F. LEWIS.

Thy stone, O Sisyphus, stands still,
Ixion rests upon his wheel,
And the pale spectres dance!
The furies sink upon their iron beds.

Tandem vincimur, arbiter
Umbrarum, miserans, ait—
Donemus, camitem viro,
Emptam carmine, conjugem.

Subdued at length, Hell's pitying monarch cry'd
The song rewarding, let us yield the bride.
F. LEWIS.

He sung, and hell consented
To hear the poet's prayer;
Stern Proserpine relented,
And gave him back the fair.

Heu, noctis prope terminos
Orpheus Eurydicen suam
Vidit, perdidit, occidit.

Nor yet the golden verge of day begun,
When Orpheus, her unhappy lord,
Eurydice to life restored,
At once beheld, and lost, and was undone.
F. LEWIS.

But soon, too soon, the lover turns his eyes:
Again she falls, again she dies, she dies!

No writer can be fully convicted of imitation, except there is a concurrence of more resemblance than can be imagined to have happened by chance; as where the same ideas are conjoined without any natural series or necessary coherence, or where not only the thought but the words are copied. Thus, it can scarcely be doubted that in the first of the following passages Pope remembered Ovid, and that in the second he copied Crashaw.

Sæpe pater dixit, studium quid inutile tentas?
Mæonides nullas ipse reliquet opes—
Sponte suâ carmen numeros veniebat ad aptos,
Et quod tentabam dicere, versus erat. OVID.

Quit, quit this barren trade, my father cried:
Ev'n Homer left no riches when he died—
In verse spontaneous flow'd my native strain,
Forced by no sweat or labour of the brain.
F. LEWIS.

I left no calling for this idle trade;
No duty broke, no father disobey'd;
While yet a child, ere yet a fool to fame,
I lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came. POPE.

—This plain floor,
Believe me, reader, can say more
Than many a braver marble can,
Here lies a truly honest man. CRASHAW.

This modest stone, what few vain marbles can,
May truly say, Here lies an honest man. POPE.

Conceits, or thoughts not immediately impressed by sensible objects, or necessarily arising from the coalition or comparison of common sentiments, may be with great justice suspected whenever they are found a second time. Thus Waller probably owed to Grotius an elegant compliment.

Here lies the learned Savil's heir,
So early wise, and lasting fair,
That none, except her years they told,
Thought her a child, or thought her old. WALLER.

Unica lux sæcli, genitoris gloria, nemo
Quem puerum, nemo credidit esse senem. GROT.

The age's miracle, his father's joy!
Nor old you would pronounce him, nor a boy.
F. LEWIS.

And Prior was indebted for a pretty illustration to Alleyne's poetical history of Henry the Seventh: —

For nought but life itself, itself can show,
And only kings can write, what kings can do.
ALLEYNE.

Your music's power, your music must disclose,
For what light is, 'tis only light that shows. PRIOR.

And with yet more certainty may the same writer be censured, for endeavouring the clandestine appropriation of a thought which he borrowed, surely without thinking himself disgraced, from an epigram of Plato: —

Τῇ Παφίῃ τὸ κάτοπτρον· ἐπεὶ τοίη μὲν ὁρᾶσθαι
Οὐκ ἐθέλω, ἣν δ' οἵη πάρος, οὐ δύναμαι.

Venus take my votive glass,
Since I am not what I was;
What from this day I shall be,
Venus let me never see.

As not every instance of similitude can be considered as a proof of imitation, so not every imitation ought to be stigmatized as plagiarism. The adoption of a noble sentiment, or the insertion of a borrowed ornament, may sometimes display so much judgment as will almost compensate for invention;

and an inferior genius may, without any imputation of servility, pursue the path of the ancients, provided he declines to tread in their footsteps.

No. 144. SATURDAY, AUGUST 3, 1751.

—Daphnidis arcum
Fregisti et calamos: quæ tu, perverse Menalca,
Et cùm vidisti puero donata, dolebas;
Et si non aliquâ nocuisses, mortuus esses.

VIRG. ECL. iii. 12.

The bow of Daphnis and the shafts you broke;
When the fair boy received the gift of right;
And but for mischief, you had died for spite.

DRYDEN.

It is impossible to mingle in conversation without observing the difficulty with which a new name makes its way into the world. The first appearance of excellence unites multitudes against it; unexpected opposition rises up on every side; the celebrated and the obscure join in the confederacy; subtilty furnishes arms to impudence, and invention leads on credulity.

The strength and unanimity of this alliance is not easily conceived. It might be expected that no man should suffer his heart to be inflamed by malice, but by injuries; that none should busy himself in contesting the pretensions of another, but when some right of his own was involved in the question; that at least hostilities commenced without cause, should

quickly cease; that the armies of malignity should soon disperse, when no common interest could be found to hold them together; and that the attack upon a rising character should be left to those who had something to hope or fear from the event.

The hazards of those that aspire to eminence, would be much diminished if they had none but acknowledged rivals to encounter. Their enemies would then be few, but what is of yet greater importance, would be known. But what caution is sufficient to ward off the blows of invisible assailants, or what force can stand against unintermitted attacks, and a continual succession of enemies? Yet such is the state of the world, that no sooner can any man emerge from the crowd, and fix the eyes of the public upon him, than he stands as a mark to the arrows of lurking calumny, and receives, in the tumult of hostility, from distant and from nameless hands, wounds not always easy to be cured.

It is probable that the onset against the candidates for renown, is originally incited by those who imagine themselves in danger of suffering by their success; but when war is once declared, volunteers flock to the standard, multitudes follow the camp only for want of employment, and flying squadrons are dispersed to every part, so pleased with an opportunity of mischief, that they toil without prospect of praise, and pillage without hope of profit.

When any man has endeavoured to deserve distinction, he will be surprised to hear himself censured where he could not expect to have been named; he will find the utmost acrimony of malice among those whom he never could have offended.

As there are to be found in the service of envy, men of every diversity of temper and degree of understanding, calumny is diffused by all arts and

methods of propagation. Nothing is too gross or too refined, too cruel or too trifling, to be practised; very little regard is had to the rules of honourable hostility, but every weapon is accounted lawful, and those that cannot make a thrust at life are content to keep themselves in play with petty malevolence, to tease with feeble blows and impotent disturbance.

But as the industry of observation has divided the most miscellaneous and confused assemblages into proper classes, and ranged the insects of the summer, that torment us with their drones or stings, by their several tribes; the persecutors of merit, notwithstanding their numbers, may be likewise commodiously distinguished into Roarers, Whisperers, and Moderators.

The Roarer is an enemy rather terrible than dangerous. He has no other qualification for a champion of controversy than a hardened front and strong voice. Having seldom so much desire to confute as to silence, he depends rather upon vociferation than argument, and has very little care to adjust one part of his accusation to another, to preserve decency in his language or probability in his narratives. He has always a store of reproachful epithets and contemptuous appellations ready to be produced, as occasion may require, which, by constant use, he pours out with resistless volubility. If the wealth of a trader is mentioned, he, without hesitation, devotes him to bankruptcy; if the beauty and elegance of a lady be commended, he wonders how the town can fall in love with rustic deformity: if a new performance of genius happen to be celebrated, he pronounces the writer a hopeless idiot, without knowledge of books or life, and without the understanding by which it must be acquired. His exaggerations are generally without effect upon those

whom he compels to hear them; and though it will sometimes happen that the timorous are awed by his violence, than the credulous mistake his confidence for knowledge, yet the opinions which he endeavours to suppress soon recover their former strength, as the trees that bend to the tempest erect themselves again when its force is past.

The Whisperer is more dangerous. He easily gains attention by a soft address, and excites curiosity by an air of importance. As secrets are not to be made cheap by promiscuous publication, he calls a select audience about him, and gratifies their vanity with an appearance of trust by communicating his intelligence in a low voice. Of the trader he can tell, that though he seems to manage an extensive commerce, and talks in high terms of the funds, yet his wealth is not equal to his reputation; he has lately suffered much by an expensive project, and had a greater share than is acknowledged in the rich ship that perished by the storm. Of the beauty he has little to say, but that they who see her in a morning, do not discover all those graces which are admired in the park. Of the writer he affirms with great certainty, that though the excellence of the work be incontestable, he can claim but a small part of the reputation; that he owed most of the images and sentiments to a secret friend; and that the accuracy and equality of the style was produced by the successive correction of the chief critics of the age.

As every one is pleased with imagining that he knows something not yet commonly divulged, secret history easily gains credit; but it is for the most part believed only while it circulates in whispers; and when once it is openly told, is openly confuted.

The most pernicious enemy is the man of modera-

tion. Without interest in the question, or any motive but honest curiosity, this impartial and zealous inquirer after truth is ready to hear either side, and always disposed to kind interpretations and favorable opinions. He has heard the trader's affairs reported with great variation, and after a diligent comparison of the evidence, concludes it probable that the splendid superstructure of business being originally built upon a narrow basis, has lately been found to totter; but between dilatory payment and bankruptcy there is a great distance; many merchants have supported themselves by expedients for a time without any final injury to their creditors; and, what is lost by one adventure, may be recovered by another. He believes that a young lady pleased with admiration, and desirous to make perfect what is already excellent, may heighten her charms by artificial improvements; but surely most of her beauties must be genuine, and who can say that he is wholly what he endeavours to appear? The author he knows to be a man of diligence, who, perhaps, does not sparkle with the fire of Homer, but has the judgment to discover his own deficiencies, and to supply them by the help of others; and, in his opinion, modesty is a quality so amiable and rare, that it ought to find a patron wherever it appears, and may justly be preferred by the public suffrage to petulant wit and ostentatious literature.

He who thus discovers failings with unwillingness, and extenuates the faults which cannot be denied, puts an end at once to doubt or vindication; his hearers repose upon his candour and veracity, and admit the charge without allowing the excuse.

Such are the arts by which the envious, the idle, the peevish, and the thoughtless, obstruct that worth

which they cannot equal; and, by artifices thus easy, sordid, and detestable, is industry defeated, beauty blasted, and genius depressed.

No. 145. TUESDAY, AUGUST 6, 1751.

Non, si priores Mœonius tenet
Sedes Homerus, Pindaricæ latent,
Cœæque et Alcæi minaces,
Stesichorique graves Camœnæ.

HOR. CAR. iv. 9. 5.

What though the muse her Homer throned
High above all th' immortal quire;
Nor Pindar's rapture she disowns,
Nor hides the plaintive Cæan lyre:
Alcæus strikes the tyrant's soul with dread,
Nor yet is grave Stesichorus unread. FRANCIS.

It is allowed that vocations and employments of least dignity are of the most apparent use; that the meanest artisan or manufacturer contributes more to the accommodations of life, than the profound scholar and argumentative theorist; and that the public would suffer less present inconvenience from the banishment of philosophers than from the extinction of any common trade.

Some have been so forcibly struck with this observation, that they have, in the first warmth of their discovery, thought it reasonable to alter the common distribution of dignity, and ventured to condemn mankind of universal ingratitude. For justice exacts, that those by whom we are most benefited

should be most honoured. And what labour can be more useful than that which procures to families and communities those necessaries which supply the wants of nature, or those conveniences by which ease, security, and elegance are conferred?

This is one of the innumerable theories which the first attempt to reduce them into practice certainly destroys. If we estimate dignity by immediate usefulness, agriculture is, undoubtedly, the first and noblest science; yet we see the plough driven, the clod broken, the manure spread, the seeds scattered, and the harvest reaped, by men whom those that feed upon their industry will never be persuaded to admit into the same rank with heroes, or with sages; and who, after all the confessions which truth may extort in favour of their occupation, must be content to fill up the lowest class of the commonwealth, to form the base of the pyramid of subordination, and lie buried in obscurity themselves, while they support all that is splendid, conspicuous, or exalted.

It will be found, upon a closer inspection, that this part of the conduct of mankind is by no means contrary to reason or equity. Remuneratory honours are proportioned at once to the usefulness and difficulty of performances, and are properly adjusted by comparison of the mental and corporeal abilities which they appear to employ. That work, however necessary, which is carried on only by muscular strength and manual dexterity, is not of equal esteem, in the consideration of rational beings, with the tasks that exercise the intellectual powers, and require the active vigour of imagination, or the gradual and laborious investigations of reason.

The merit of all manual occupations seems to terminate in the inventor; and surely the first ages cannot be charged with ingratitude; since those who

civilized barbarians, and taught them how to secure themselves from cold and hunger, were numbered amongst their deities. But these arts once discovered by philosophy, and facilitated by experience, are afterwards practised with very little assistance from the faculties of the soul; nor is any thing necessary to the regular discharge of these inferior duties, beyond that rude observation which the most sluggish intellect may practise, and that industry which the stimulations of necessity naturally enforce.

Yet though the refusal of statues and panegyric to those who employ only their hands and feet in the service of mankind may be easily justified, I am far from intending to incite the petulance of pride, to justify the superciliousness of grandeur, or to intercept any part of that tenderness and benevolence which, by the privilege of their common nature, one man may claim from another.

That it would be neither wise nor equitable to discourage the husbandman, the labourer, the miner, or the smith, is generally granted; but there is another race of beings equally obscure and equally indigent, who, because their usefulness is less obvious to vulgar apprehensions, live unrewarded and die unpitied, and who have been long exposed to insult without a defender, and to censure without an apologist.

The authors of London were formerly computed, by Swift, at several thousands, and there is not any reason for suspecting that their number has decreased. Of these, only a very few can be said to produce, or endeavour to produce, new ideas, to extend any principle of science, or gratify the imagination with any uncommon train of images or contexture of events; the rest, however laborious,

however arrogant, can only be considered as the drudges of the pen, the manufacturers of literature, who have set up for authors, either with or without a regular initiation, and, like other artificers, have no other care than to deliver their tale of wares at the stated time.

It has been formerly imagined that he who intends the entertainment or instruction of others, must feel in himself some peculiar impulse of genius, that he must watch the happy minute in which his natural fire is excited, in which his mind is elevated with nobler sentiments, enlightened with clearer views, and invigorated with stronger comprehension; that he must carefully select his thoughts and polish his expressions; and animate his efforts with the hope of raising a monument of learning, which neither time nor envy shall be able to destroy.

But the authors whom I am now endeavouring to recommend have been too long 'hackneyed in the ways of men' to indulge the chimerical ambition of immortality; they have seldom any claim to the trade of writing, but that they have tried some other without success; they perceive no particular summons to composition, except the sound of the clock; they have no other rule than the law or the fashion for admitting their thoughts or rejecting them; and, about the opinion of posterity, they have little solicitude, for their productions are seldom intended to remain in the world longer than a week.

That such authors are not to be rewarded with praise is evident, since nothing can be admired when it ceases to exist; but surely though they cannot aspire to honour, they may be exempted from ignominy, and adopted into that order of men which deserves our kindness, though not our reverence. These papers of the day, the ephemeræ of learning,

have uses more adequate to the purposes of common life than more pompous and durable volumes. If it is necessary for every man to be more acquainted with his contemporaries than with past generations, and to rather know the events which may immediately affect his fortune or quiet, than the revolutions of ancient kingdoms, in which he has neither possessions nor expectations; if it be pleasing to hear of the preferment and dismission of statesmen, the birth of heirs, and the marriage of beauties, the humble author of journals and gazettes must be considered as a liberal dispenser of beneficial knowledge.

Even the abridger, compiler, and translator, though their labours cannot be ranked with those of the diurnal historiographer, yet must not be rashly doomed to annihilation. Every size of readers require a genius of correspondent capacity; some delight in abstracts and epitomes, because they want room in their memory for long details, and content themselves with effects, without inquiry after causes; some minds are overpowered by splendor of sentiment, as some eyes are offended by a glaring light; such will gladly contemplate an author in an humble imitation, as we look without pain upon the sun in the water.

As every writer has his use, every writer ought to have his patrons; and since no man, however high he may now stand, can be certain that he shall not be soon thrown down from his elevation by criticism or caprice, the common interest of learning requires that her sons should cease from intestine hostilities, and instead of sacrificing each other to malice and contempt, endeavour to avert persecution from the meanest of their fraternity.

No. 146. SATURDAY, AUGUST 10, 1751.

Sunt illic duo, tresve, qui revolvant
Nostrarum tineas ineptiarum:
Sed cùm sponsio, fabulæque lassæ
De scorpo fuerint et incitato.

MART. EP. xi. 1. 13.

'T is possible that one or two
These fooleries of mine may view;
But then the bettings must be o'er,
Nor *Crab* or *Childers* talk'd of more. F. LEWIS.

NONE of the projects or designs which exercise the mind of man are equally subject to obstructions and disappointments with the pursuit of fame. Riches cannot easily be denied to them who have something of greater value to offer in exchange; he whose fortune is endangered by litigation, will not refuse to augment the wealth of the lawyer; he whose days are darkened by languor, or whose nerves are excruciated by pain, is compelled to pay tribute to the science of healing. But praise may be always omitted without inconvenience. When once a man has made celebrity necessary to his happiness, he has put it in the power of the weakest and most timorous malignity, if not to take away his satisfaction, at least to withhold it. His enemies may indulge their pride by airy negligence, and gratify their malice by quiet neutrality. They that could never have injured a character by invectives, may combine to annihilate it by silence; as the women of Rome threatened to put an end to con-

quest and dominion, by supplying no children to the commonwealth.

When a writer has, with long toil, produced a work intended to burst upon mankind with unexpected lustre, and withdraw the attention of the learned world from every other controversy or inquiry, he is seldom contented to wait long without the enjoyment of his new praises. With an imagination full of his own importance, he walks out like a monarch in disguise, to learn the various opinions of his readers. Prepared to feast upon admiration; composed to encounter censures without emotion; and determined not to suffer his quiet to be injured by a sensibility too exquisite of praise or blame, but to laugh with equal contempt at vain objections and injudicious commendations, he enters the place of mingled conversation, sits down to his tea in an obscure corner, and while he appears to examine a file of antiquated journals, catches the conversation of the whole room. He listens, but hears no mention of his book, and, therefore, supposes that he has disappointed his curiosity by delay; and that as men of learning would naturally begin their conversation with such a wonderful novelty, they had digressed to other subjects before his arrival. The company disperses, and their places are supplied by others equally ignorant, or equally careless. The same expectation hurries him to another place, from which the same disappointment drives him soon away. His impatience then grows violent and tumultuous; he ranges over the town with restless curiosity, and hears in one quarter of a cricket-match, in another of a pickpocket; is told by some of an unexpected bankruptcy, by others of a turtle feast; is sometimes provoked by importunate inquiries after the white bear, and sometimes with praises of the dancing

dog; he is afterwards entreated to give his judgment upon a wager about the height of the Monument; invited to see a foot-race in the adjacent villages; desired to read a ludicrous advertisement; or consulted about the most effectual method of making inquiry after a favourite cat. The whole world is busied in affairs, which he thinks below the notice of reasonable creatures, and which are, nevertheless, sufficient to withdraw all regard from his labours and his merits.

He resolves at last to violate his own modesty, and to recall the talkers from their folly by an inquiry after himself. He finds every one provided with an answer; one has seen the work advertised, but never met with any that had read it; another has been so often imposed upon by specious titles, that he never buys a book till its character is established; a third wonders what any man can hope to produce after so many writers of greater eminence; the next has inquired after the author, but can hear no account of him, and, therefore, suspects the name to be fictitious; and another knows him to be a man condemned by indigence to write too frequently what he does not understand.

Many are the consolations with which the unhappy author endeavours to allay his vexation, and fortify his patience. He has written with too little indulgence to the understanding of common readers; he has fallen upon an age in which solid knowledge, and delicate refinement, have given way to low merriment and idle buffoonery; and, therefore, no writer can hope for distinction, who has any higher purpose than to raise laughter. He finds that his enemies, such as superiority will always raise, have been industrious, while his performance was in the press, to vilify and blast it; and that the bookseller,

whom he had resolved to enrich, has rivals that obstruct the circulation of his copies. He at last reposes upon the consideration, that the noblest works of learning and genius have always made their way slowly against ignorance and prejudice; and that reputation, which is never to be lost, must be gradually obtained, as animals of longest life are observed not soon to attain their full stature and strength.

By such arts of voluntary delusion does every man endeavour to conceal his own unimportance from himself. It is long before we are convinced of the small proportion which every individual bears to the collective body of mankind; or learn how few can be interested in the fortune of any single man; how little vacancy is left in the world for any new object of attention; to how small extent the brightest blaze of merit can be spread amidst the mists of business and of folly; and how soon it is clouded by the intervention of other novelties. Not only the writer of books, but the commander of armies, and the deliverer of nations, will easily outlive all noisy and popular reputation: he may be celebrated for a time by the public voice, but his actions and his name will soon be considered as remote and unaffecting, and be rarely mentioned but by those whose alliance gives them some vanity to gratify by frequent commemoration.

It seems not to be sufficiently considered how little renown can be admitted in the world. Mankind are kept perpetually busy by their fears or desires, and have not more leisure from their own affairs, than to acquaint themselves with the accidents of the current day. Engaged in contriving some refuge from calamity, or in shortening the way to some new possession, they seldom suffer their

thoughts to wander to the past or future; none but a few solitary students have leisure to inquire into the claims of ancient heroes or sages; and names which hoped to range over kingdoms and continents shrink at last into cloisters or colleges.

Nor is it certain, that even of these dark and narrow habitations, these last retreats of fame, the possession will be long kept. Of men devoted to literature, very few extend their view beyond some particular science, and the greater part seldom inquire, even in their own profession, for any authors but those whom the present mode of study happens to force upon their notice; they desire not to fill their minds with unfashionable knowledge, but contentedly resign to oblivion those books which they now find censured or neglected.

The hope of fame is necessarily connected with such considerations as must abate the ardour of confidence, and repress the vigour of pursuit. Whoever claims renown from any kind of excellence, expects to fill the place which is now possessed by another; for there are already names of every class sufficient to employ all that will desire to remember them; and surely he that is pushing his predecessors into the gulf of obscurity, cannot but sometimes suspect that he must himself sink in like manner, and, as he stands upon the same precipice, be swept away with the same violence.

It sometimes happens that fame begins when life is at an end; but far the greater number of candidates for applause have owed their reception in the world to some favourable casualties, and have therefore immediately sunk into neglect, when death stripped them of their casual influence, and neither fortune nor patronage operated in their favour. Among those who have better claims to regard, the

honour paid to their memory is commonly proportionate to the reputation which they enjoyed in their lives, though still growing fainter, as it is at a greater distance from the first emission; and since it is so difficult to obtain the notice of contemporaries, how little is it to be hoped from future times? What can merit effect by its own force, when the help of art or friendship can scarcely support it?

No. 147. TUESDAY, AUGUST 13, 1751.

Tu nihil invitâ dices facieve Minervâ.

HOR. ARS POET. 385.

—You are of too quick a sight,
Not to discern which way your talent lies.

ROSCOMMON.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

"As little things grow great by continual accumulation, I hope you will not think the dignity of your character impaired by an account of a ludicrous persecution, which, though it produces no scenes of horror or of ruin, yet, by incessant importunity of vexation, wears away my happiness, and consumes those years which nature seems particularly to have assigned to cheerfulness, in silent anxiety and helpless resentment.

"I am the eldest son of a gentleman, who having inherited a large estate from his ancestors, and feel-

ing no desire either to increase or lessen it, has from the time of his marriage generally resided at his own seat; where, by dividing his time among the duties of a father, a master, and a magistrate, the study of literature, and the offices of civility, he finds means to rid himself of the day, without any of those amusements, which all those with whom my residence in this place has made me acquainted think necessary to lighten the burden of existence.

"When my age made me capable of instruction, my father prevailed upon a gentleman, long known at Oxford for the extent of his learning and purity of his manners, to undertake my education. The regard with which I saw him treated, disposed me to consider his instructions as important, and I therefore soon formed a habit of attention, by which I made very quick advances in different kinds of learning, and heard, perhaps too often, very flattering comparisons of my own proficiency with that of others, either less docile by nature, or less happily forwarded by instruction. I was caressed by all that exchanged visits with my father; and, as young men are, with little difficulty, taught to judge favourably of themselves, began to think that close application was no longer necessary, and that the time was now come when I was at liberty to read only for amusement, and was to receive the reward of my fatigues in praise and admiration.

"While I was thus banqueting upon my own perfections, and longing in secret to escape from tutorage, my father's brother came from London to pass a summer at his native place. A lucrative employment, which he possessed, and a fondness for the conversation and diversions of the gay part of mankind, had so long kept him from rural excursions, that I had never seen him since my infancy. My

curiosity was therefore strongly excited by the hope of observing a character more nearly, which I had hitherto reverenced only at a distance.

"From all private and intimate conservation I was long withheld by the perpetual confluence of visitants, with whom the first news of my uncle's arrival crowded the house; but was amply recompensed by seeing an exact and punctilious practice of the arts of a courtier, in all the stratagems of endearment, the gradations of respect, and variations of courtesy. I remarked with what justice of distribution he divided his talk to a wide circle; with what address he offered to every man an occasion of indulging some favourite topic, or displaying some particular attainment; the judgment with which he regulated his inquiries after the absent; and the care with which he showed all the companions of his early years how strongly they were infixed in his memory, by the mention of past incidents, and the recital of puerile kindnesses, dangers, and frolics. I soon discovered that he possessed some science of graciousness and attraction which books had not taught, and of which neither I nor my father had any knowledge; that he had the power of obliging those whom he did not benefit; that he diffused, upon his cursory behaviour and most trifling actions, a gloss of softness and delicacy by which every one was dazzled; and that by some occult method of captivation, he animated the timorous, softened the supercilious, and opened the reserved. I could not but repine at the inelegance of my own manners, which left me no hopes but not to offend, and at the inefficacy of rustic benevolence, which gained no friends but by real service.

"My uncle saw the veneration with which I caught every accent of his voice, and watched every

motion of his hand; and the awkward diligence with which I endeavoured to imitate his embrace of fondness, and his bow of respect. He was, like others, easily flattered by an imitator by whom he could not fear ever to be rivalled, and repaid my assiduities with compliments and professions. Our fondness was so increased by a mutual endeavour to please each other, that when he returned to London, he declared himself unable to leave a nephew so amiable and so accomplished behind him; and obtained my father's permission to enjoy my company for a few months, by a promise to initiate me in the arts of politeness, and introduce me into public life.

"The courtier had little inclination to fatigue, and therefore, by travelling very slowly, afforded me time for more loose and familiar conversation; but I soon found, that, by a few inquiries which he was not well prepared to satisfy, I had made him weary of his young companion. His element was a mixed assembly, where ceremony and healths, compliments and common topics, kept the tongue employed with very little assistance from memory or reflection; but in the chariot, where he was necessitated to support a regular tenor of conversation, without any relief from a new-comer, or any power of starting into gay digressions, or destroying argument by a jest, he soon discovered that poverty of ideas which had been hitherto concealed under the tinsel of politeness. The first day he entertained me with the novelties and wonders with which I should be astonished at my entrance into London, and cautioned me with apparent admiration of his own wisdom against the arts by which rusticity is frequently deluded. The same detail and the same advice he would have repeated on the second day; but as I every moment diverted

the discourse to the history of the towns by which we passed, or some other subject of learning or reason, he soon lost his vivacity, grew peevish and silent, wrapped his cloak about him, composed himself to slumber, and reserved his gayety for fitter auditors.

"At length I entered London, and my uncle was reinstated in his superiority. He awaked at once to loquacity as soon as our wheels rattled on the pavement, and told me the name of every street as we crossed it, and owner of every house as we passed by. He presented me to my aunt, a lady of great eminence for the number of her acquaintances and splendor of her assemblies, and either in kindness or revenge consulted with her, in my presence, how I might be most advantageously dressed for my first appearance, and most expeditiously disincumbered from my villatic bashfulness. My indignation at familiarity thus contemptuous flushed in my face; they mistook anger for shame, and alternately exerted their eloquence upon the benefits of public education, and the happiness of an assurance early acquired.

"Assurance is, indeed, the only qualification to which they seem to have annexed merit, and assurance, therefore, is perpetually recommended to me as the supply of every defect, and the ornament of every excellence. I never sit silent in company when secret history is circulating, but I am reproached for want of assurance. If I fail to return the stated answer to a compliment; if I am disconcerted by unexpected raillery; if I blush when I am discovered gazing on a beauty, or hesitate when I find myself embarrassed in an argument; if I am unwilling to talk of what I do not understand, or timorous in undertaking offices which I cannot grace-

fully perform; if I suffer a more lively tattler to recount the casualties of a game, or a nimbler fop to pick up a fan, I am censured between pity and contempt, as a wretch doomed to grovel in obscurity for want of assurance.

"I have found many young persons harassed in the same manner, by those to whom age has given nothing but the assurance which they recommend; and therefore cannot but think it useful to inform them, that cowardice and delicacy are not to be confounded; and that he whose stupidity has armed him against the shafts of ridicule, will always act and speak with greater audacity, than they whose sensibility represses their ardour, and who dare never let their confidence outgrow their abilities.

No. 148. SATURDAY, AUGUST 17, 1751.

Me pater sævis oneret catenis,
Quòd viro clemens misero peperci:
Me vel extremos Numidarum in agros
Classe releget. HOR. CAR. iii. 11. 45.

Me let my father load with chains,
Or banish to Numidia's furthest plains!
My crime, that I, a loyal wife,
In kind compassion spared my husband's life.

FRANCIS.

Politicians remark, that no oppression is so heavy or lasting as that which is inflicted by the perversion and exorbitance of legal authority. The robber may be seized, and the invader repelled,

whenever they are found; they who pretend no right but that of force, may by force be punished or suppressed. But when plunder bears the name of impost, and murder is perpetrated by a judicial sentence, fortitude is intimidated and wisdom confounded; resistance shrinks from an alliance with rebellion, and the villain remains secure in the robes of the magistrate.

Equally dangerous and equally detestable are the cruelties often exercised in private families, under the venerable sanction of parental authority; the power which we are taught to honour from the first moments of reason; which is guarded from insult and violation by all that can impress awe upon the mind of man; and which therefore may wanton in cruelty without control, and trample the bounds of right with innumerable transgressions, before duty and piety will dare to seek redress, or think themselves at liberty to recur to any other means of deliverance than supplications by which insolence is elated, and tears by which cruelty is gratified.

It was for a long time imagined by the Romans, that no son could be the murderer of his father; and they had, therefore, no punishment appropriated to parricide. They seem likewise to have believed with equal confidence, that no father could be cruel to his child; and, therefore, they allowed every man the supreme judicature in his own house, and put the lives of his offspring into his hands. But experience informed them, by degrees, that they had determined too hastily in favour of human nature; they found that instinct and habit were not able to contend with avarice or malice; that the nearest relation might be violated; and that power, to whomsoever intrusted, might be ill employed. They were therefore obliged to supply and to change their insti-

tutions; to deter the parricide by a new law, and to transfer capital punishments from the parent to the magistrate.

There are, indeed, many houses which it is impossible to enter familiarly, without discovering that parents are by no means exempt from the intoxications of dominion; and that he who is in no danger of hearing remonstrances but from his own conscience, will seldom be long without the art of controlling his convictions, and modifying justice by his own will.

If in any situation the heart were inaccessible to malignity, it might be supposed to be sufficiently secured by parental relation. To have voluntarily become to any being the occasion of its existence, produces an obligation to make that existence happy. To see helpless infancy stretching out her hands, and pouring out her cries in testimony of dependence, without any powers to alarm jealousy, or any guilt to alienate affection, must surely awaken tenderness in every human mind; and tenderness once excited will be hourly increased by the natural contagion of felicity, by the repercussion of communicated pleasure, by the consciousness of the dignity of benefaction. I believe no generous or benevolent man can see the vilest animal courting his regard, and shrinking at his anger, playing his gambols of delight before him, calling on him in distress, and flying to him in danger, without more kindness than he can persuade himself to feel for the wild and unsocial inhabitants of the air and water. We naturally endear to ourselves those to whom we impart any kind of pleasure, because we imagine their affection and esteem secured to us by the benefits which they receive.

There is, indeed, another method by which the

pride of superiority may be likewise gratified. He that has extinguished all the sensations of humanity, and has no longer any satisfaction in the reflection that he is loved as the distributer of happiness, may please himself with exciting terror as the inflictor of pain; he may delight his solitude with contemplating the extent of his power and the force of his commands, in imagining the desires that flutter on the tongue which is forbidden to utter them, or the discontent which preys on the heart in which fear confines it; he may amuse himself with new contrivances of detection, multiplications of prohibition, and varieties of punishment; and swell with exultation when he considers how little of the homage that he receives he owes to choice.

That princes of this character have been known, the history of all absolute kingdoms will inform us; and since, as Aristotle observes, *ἡ οἰκονομικὴ μοναρχία*, the government of a family is naturally monarchical, it is like other monarchies too often arbitrarily administered. The regal and parental tyrant differ only in the extent of their dominions, and the number of their slaves. The same passions cause the same miseries; except that seldom any prince, however despotic, has so far shaken off all awe of the public eye, as to venture upon those freaks of injustice, which are sometimes indulged under the secrecy of a private dwelling. Capricious injunctions, partial decisions, unequal allotments, distributions of reward not by merit but by fancy, and punishments regulated not by the degree of the offence, but by the humour of the judge, are too frequent where no power is known but that of a father.

That he delights in the misery of others no man will confess, and yet what other motive can make a

father cruel? The king may be instigated by one man to the destruction of another; he may sometimes think himself endangered by the virtues of a subject; he may dread the successful general or the popular orator; his avarice may point out golden confiscations; and his guilt may whisper that he can only be secure by cutting off all power of revenge.

But what can a parent hope from the oppression of those who were born to his protection, of those who can disturb him with no competition, who can enrich him with no spoils? Why cowards are cruel may be easily discovered; but for what reason, not more infamous than cowardice, can that man delight in oppression who has nothing to fear?

The unjustifiable severity of a parent is loaded with this aggravation, that those whom he injures are always in his sight. The injustice of a prince is often exercised upon those of whom he never had any personal or particular knowledge; and the sentence which he pronounces, whether of banishment, imprisonment, or death, removes from his view the man whom he condemns. But the domestic oppressor dooms himself to gaze upon those faces which he clouds with terror and with sorrow; and beholds every moment the effects of his own barbarities. He that can bear to give continual pain to those who surround him, and can walk with satisfaction in the gloom of his own presence; he that can see submissive misery without relenting, and meet without emotion the eye that implores mercy or demands justice, will scarcely be amended by remonstrance or admonition; he has found means of stopping the avenues of tenderness, and arming his heart against the force of reason.

Even though no consideration should be paid to

the great law of social beings, by which every individual is commanded to consult the happiness of others, yet the harsh parent is less to be vindicated than any other criminal, because he less provides for the happiness of himself. Every man, however little he loves others, would willingly be loved; every man hopes to live long, and, therefore, hopes for that time at which he shall sink back to imbecility, and must depend for ease and cheerfulness upon the officiousness of others. But how has he obviated the inconveniences of old age, who alienates from him the assistance of his children, and whose bed must be surrounded in his last hours, in the hours of languor and dejection, of impatience and of pain, by strangers to whom his life is indifferent, or by enemies to whom his death is desirable.

Piety will, indeed, in good minds, overcome provocation, and those who have been harassed by brutality will forget the injuries which they have suffered, so far as to perform the last duties with alacrity and zeal. But surely no resentment can be equally painful with kindness thus undeserved, nor can severer punishment be imprecated upon a man not wholly lost in meanness and stupidity, than through the tediousness of decrepitude, to be reproached by the kindness of his own children, to receive not the tribute but the alms of attendance, and to owe every relief of his miseries, not to gratitude but to mercy.

No. 149. TUESDAY, AUGUST 20, 1751.

Quòd non sit Pylades hoc tempore, non sit Orestes,
Miraris? Pylades, Marce, bibebat idem.
Nec melior panis, turdusve dabatur Oresti:
Sed par, atque eadem cœna duobus erat.—
Te Cadmæa Tyros, me pinguis Gallia vestit
Vis te purpureum, Marce, sagatus amem?
Ut præstem Pyladen, aliquis mihi præstet Orestem:
Hoc non fit verbis, Marce: ut ameris, ama.

MART. EP. vi. 11.

You wonder now that no man sees
Such friends as those of ancient Greece.
Here lay the point——Orestes' meat
Was just the same his friend did eat;
Nor can it yet be found, his wine
Was better, Pylades, than thine.
In homespun russet I am drest,
Your cloth is always of the best;
But, honest Marcus, if you please
To choose me for your Pylades,
Remember, words alone are vain;
Love——if you would be loved again. F. LEWIS.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

"No depravity of the mind has been more frequently or justly censured than ingratitude. There is, indeed, sufficient reason for looking on those that can return evil for good, and repay kindness and assistance with hatred or neglect, as corrupted beyond the common degrees of wickedness; nor will he, who has once been clearly detected in acts of injury to his benefactor, deserve to be numbered among social beings; he has endeavoured to destroy

confidence, to intercept sympathy, and to turn every man's attention wholly on himself.

"There is always danger lest the honest abhorrence of a crime should raise the passions with too much violence against the man to whom it is imputed. In proportion as guilt is more enormous, it ought to be ascertained by stronger evidence. The charge against ingratitude is very general; almost every man can tell what favours he has conferred upon insensibility, and how much happiness he has bestowed without return; but, perhaps, if these patrons and protectors were confronted with any whom they boast of having befriended, it would often appear that they consulted only their pleasure or vanity, and repaid themselves their petty donatives by gratifications of insolence and indulgence of contempt.

"It has happened that much of my time has been passed in a dependent state, and consequently I have received many favours in the opinion of those at whose expense I have been maintained; yet I do not feel in my heart any burning gratitude or tumultuous affection; and, as I would not willingly suppose myself less susceptible of virtuous passions than the rest of mankind, I shall lay the history of my life before you, that you may, by your judgment of my conduct, either reform or confirm my present sentiments.

"My father was the second son of a very ancient and wealthy family. He married a lady of equal birth, and whose fortune, joined to his own, might have supported his posterity in honour; but being gay and ambitious, he prevailed on his friends to procure him a post, which gave him an opportunity of displaying his elegance and politeness. My mother was equally pleased with splendor, and equally

careless of expense; they both justified their profusion to themselves, by endeavouring to believe it necessary to the extension of their acquaintance, and improvement of their interest; and whenever any place became vacant, they expected to be repaid. In the midst of these hopes, my father was snatched away by an apoplexy; and my mother, who had no pleasure but in dress, equipage, assemblies, and compliments, finding that she could live no longer in her accustomed rank, sunk into dejection, and in two years wore out her life with envy and discontent.

"I was sent with a sister one year younger than myself to the elder brother of my father. We were not yet capable of observing how much fortune influences affection, but flattered ourselves on the road with the tenderness and regard with which we should be treated by our uncle. Our reception was rather frigid than malignant; we were introduced to our young cousins, and for the first month more frequently consoled than upbraided; but in a short time we found our prattle repressed, our dress neglected, our endearments unregarded, and our requests referred to the housekeeper.

"The forms of decency were now violated, and every day produced new insults. We were soon brought to the necessity of receding from our imagined equality with our cousins, to whom we sunk into humble companions without choice or influence, expected only to echo their opinions, facilitate their desires, and accompany their rambles. It was unfortunate that our early introduction into polite company and habitual knowledge of the arts of civility, had given us such an appearance of superiority to the awkward bashfulness of our relations, as naturally drew respect and preference from every

stranger; and my aunt was forced to assert the dignity of her own children, while they were skulking in corners for fear of notice, and hanging down their heads in silent confusion, by relating the indiscretion of our father, displaying her own kindness, lamenting the misery of birth without estate, and declaring her anxiety for our future provision, and the expedients which she had formed to secure us from those follies or crimes, to which the conjunction of pride and want often gives occasion. In a short time care was taken to prevent such vexatious mistakes; we were told that fine clothes would only fill our heads with false expectations, and our dress was, therefore, accommodated to our fortune.

"Childhood is not easily dejected or mortified. We felt no lasting pain from insolence or neglect; but finding that we were favoured and commended by all whose interest did not prompt them to discountenance us, preserved our vivacity and spirit to years of greater sensibility. It then became irksome and disgusting to live without any principle of action but the will of another, and we often met privately in the garden to lament our condition, and to ease our hearts with mutual narratives of caprice, peevishness, and affront.

"There are innumerable modes of insult and tokens of contempt for which it is not easy to find a name, which vanish to nothing in an attempt to describe them, and yet may, by continual repetition, make day pass after day in sorrow and in terror. Phrases of cursory compliment and established salutation may, by a different modulation of the voice, or cast of the countenance, convey contrary meanings, and be changed from indications of respect to expressions of scorn. The dependent who cultivates delicacy in himself very little consults his own tranquillity.

My unhappy vigilance is every moment discovering some petulance of accent, or arrogance of mien, some vehemence of interrogation, or quickness of reply, that recalls my poverty to my mind, and which I feel more acutely as I know not how to resent it.

"You are not, however, to imagine that I think myself discharged from the duties of gratitude, only because my relations do not adjust their looks or tune their voices to my expectation. The insolence of benefaction terminates not in negative rudeness or obliquities of insult. I am often told in express terms of the miseries from which charity has snatched me, while multitudes are suffered by relations equally near to devolve upon the parish; and have more than once heard it numbered among other favours, that I am admitted to the same table with my cousins.

"That I sit at the first table I must acknowledge, but I sit there only that I may feel the stings of inferiority. My inquiries are neglected, my opinion is overborne, my assertions are controverted; and as insolence always propagates itself, the servants overlook me, in imitation of their master; if I call modestly, I am not heard; if loudly, my usurpation of authority is checked by a general frown. I am often obliged to look uninvited upon delicacies, and sometimes desired to rise upon very slight pretences.

"The incivilities to which I am exposed would give me less pain, were they not aggravated by the tears of my sister, whom the young ladies are hourly tormenting with every art of feminine persecution. As it is said of the supreme magistrate of Venice, that he is a prince in one place and a slave in another, my sister is a servant to her cousins in their apartments, and a companion only at the table.

Her wit and beauty draw so much regard away from them, that they never suffer her to appear with them in any place where they solicit notice or expect admiration; and when they are visited by neighbouring ladies, and pass their hours in domestic amusements, she is sometimes called to fill a vacancy, insulted with contemptuous freedoms, and dismissed to her needle when her place is supplied. The heir has of late, by the instigation of his sisters, begun to harass her with clownish jocularity; he seems inclined to make his first rude essays of waggery upon her; and by the connivance, if not encouragement of his father, treats her with such licentious brutality, as I cannot bear, though I cannot punish it.

"I beg to be informed, Mr. Rambler, how much we can be supposed to owe to beneficence, exerted on terms like these? To beneficence which pollutes its gifts with contumely, and may be truly said to pander to pride? I would willingly be told, whether insolence does not reward its own liberalities, and whether he that exacts servility can, with justice, at the same time, expect affection.

"I am, Sir, &c.,

"HYPERDULUS."

No. 150. SATURDAY, AUGUST 24, 1751.

—O munera nondum
Intellecta Deûm! LUCAN.

—Thou chiefest good!
Bestow'd by Heaven, but seldom understood. ROWE.

As daily experience makes it evident that misfortunes are unavoidably incident to human life, that calamity will neither be repelled by fortitude, nor escaped by flight; neither awed by greatness, nor eluded by obscurity; philosophers have endeavoured to reconcile us to that condition which they cannot teach us to mend, by persuading us that most of our evils are made afflictive only by ignorance or perverseness, and that nature has annexed to every vicissitude of external circumstances, some advantage sufficient to overbalance all its inconveniences.

This attempt may, perhaps, be justly suspected of resemblance to the practice of physicians, who, when they cannot mitigate pain, destroy sensibility, and endeavour to conceal, by opiates, the inefficacy of their other medicines. The panegyrists of calamity have more frequently gained applause to their wit, than acquiescence to their arguments; nor has it appeared that the most musical oratory or subtle ratiocination has been able long to overpower the anguish of oppression, the tediousness of languor, or the longings of want.

Yet it may be generally remarked, that where

much has been attempted, something has been performed; though the discoveries or acquisitions of man are not always adequate to the expectations of his pride, they are, at least, sufficient to animate his industry. The antidotes with which philosophy has medicated the cup of life, though they cannot give it salubrity and sweetness, have at least allayed its bitterness and contempered its malignity; the balm which she drops upon the wounds of the mind abates their pain, though it cannot heal them.

By suffering willingly what we cannot avoid, we secure ourselves from vain and immoderate disquiet; we preserve for better purposes that strength which would be unprofitably wasted in wild efforts of desperation, and maintain that circumspection which may enable us to seize every support and improve every alleviation. This calmness will be more easily obtained, as the attention is more powerfully withdrawn from the contemplation of unmingled, unabated evil, and diverted to those accidental benefits which prudence may confer on every state.

Seneca has attempted not only to pacify us to misfortune, but almost to allure us to it, by representing it as necessary to the pleasures of the mind. 'He that never was acquainted with adversity,' says he, 'has seen the world but on one side, and is ignorant of half the scenes of nature.' He invites his pupil to calamity, as the Sirens allured the passenger to their coasts, by promising that he shall return *πλείονα εἰδὼς*, with increase of knowledge, with enlarged views, and multiplied ideas.

Curiosity is, in great and generous minds, the first passion and the last; and perhaps always predominates in proportion to the strength of the contemplative faculties. He who easily comprehends all that is before him, and soon exhausts any single subject,

is always eager for new inquiries; and in proportion as the intellectual eye takes in a wider prospect, it must be gratified with variety, by more rapid flights and bolder excursions; nor perhaps can there be proposed to those who have been accustomed to the pleasures of thought, a more powerful incitement to any undertaking, than the hope of filling their fancy with new images, of clearing their doubts, and enlightening their reason.

When Jason, in Valerius Flaccus, would incline the young prince Acastus to accompany him in the first essay of navigation, he disperses his apprehensions of danger by representations of the new tracts of earth and heaven which the expedition would spread before their eyes; and tells him with what grief he will hear, at their return, of the countries which they shall have seen, and the toils which they have surmounted.

O quantum terræ, quantum cognoscere cœli,
Permissum est! pelagus quantos aperimus in usus!
Nunc forsan grave reris opus: sed læta recurret
Cùm rates, et caram cùm jam mihi reddet Iolcon;
Quis pudor heu nostros tibi tunc audire labores!
Quam referam visus tua per suspiria gentes!

Led by our stars, what tracts immense we trace!
From seas remote, what funds of science raise!
A pain to thought! but when th' heroic band
Returns applauded to their native land,
A life domestic you will then deplore,
And sigh, while I describe the various shore.

EDW. CAVE.

Acastus was soon prevailed upon by his curiosity to set rocks and hardships at defiance, and commit his life to the winds; and the same motives have in all ages had the same effect upon those whom the desire of fame or wisdom has distinguished from the lower orders of mankind.

If, therefore, it can be proved that distress is necessary to the attainment of knowledge, and that a happy situation hides from us so large a part of the field of meditation, the envy of many who repine at the sight of affluence and splendor will be much diminished; for such is the delight of mental superiority, that none on whom nature or study have conferred it, would purchase the gifts of fortune by its loss.

It is certain, that however the rhetoric of Seneca may have dressed adversity with extrinsic ornaments, he has justly represented it as affording some opportunities of observation, which cannot be found in continual success; he has truly asserted, that to escape misfortune is to want instruction, and that to live at ease is to live in ignorance.

As no man can enjoy happiness without thinking that he enjoys it, the experience of calamity is necessary to a just sense of better fortune; for the good of our present state is merely comparative, and the evil which every man feels will be sufficient to disturb and harass him, if he does not know how much he escapes. The lustre of diamonds is invigorated by the interposition of darker bodies; the lights of a picture are created by the shades. The highest pleasure which nature has indulged to sensitive perception, is that of rest after fatigue; yet that state which labour heightens into delight is of itself only ease, and is incapable of satisfying the mind without the superaddition of diversified amusements.

Prosperity, as is truly asserted by Seneca, very much obstructs the knowledge of ourselves. No man can form a just estimate of his own powers by unactive speculation. That fortitude which has encountered no dangers, that prudence which has surmounted no difficulties, that integrity which has been

attacked by no temptations, can at best be considered but as gold not yet brought to the test, of which therefore the true value cannot be assigned. "He that traverses the lists without an adversary, may receive," says the philosopher, "the reward of victory, but he has no pretensions to the honour." If it be the highest happiness of man to contemplate himself with satisfaction, and to receive the gratulations of his own conscience, he whose courage has made way amidst the turbulence of opposition, and whose vigour has broken through the snares of distress, has many advantages over those that have slept in the shade of indolence, and whose retrospect of time can entertain them with nothing but day rising upon day, and year gliding after year.

Equally necessary is some variety of fortune to a nearer inspection of the manners, principles, and affections of mankind. Princes, when they would know the opinions or grievances of their subjects, find it necessary to steal away from guards and attendants, and mingle on equal terms among the people. To him who is known to have the power of doing good or harm, nothing is shown in its natural form. The behaviour of all that approach him is regulated by his humour; their narratives are adapted to his inclination, and their reasonings determined by his opinions; whatever can alarm suspicion, or excite resentment, is carefully suppressed, and nothing appears but uniformity of sentiments and ardour of affection. It may be observed that the unvaried complaisance which ladies have the right of exacting, keeps them generally unskilled in human nature; prosperity will always enjoy the female prerogatives, and therefore must be always in danger of female ignorance. Truth is scarcely to be heard, but by those from whom it can serve no interest to conceal it.

No. 151. TUESDAY, AUGUST 27, 1751.

—Ἀμφὶ δ' ανθρώ-
πων φρεσὶν ἀμπλακίαι
ἀναρίθμητοι κρέμανται·
τοῦτο δ' ἀμαχανον εὑρεῖν
Ὅτι νῦν, καὶ ἐν τελευ-
τᾷ φερτατον ἀνδρὶ τυχεῖν.

PIND. OL. OD. vii.

But wrapt in error is the human mind,
And human bliss is ever insecure:
Know we what fortune yet remains behind?
Know we how long the present shall endure?

WEST.

THE writers of medicine and physiology have traced, with great appearance of accuracy, the effects of time upon the human body, by marking the various periods of the constitution, and the several stages by which animal life makes its progress from infancy to decrepitude. Though their observations have not enabled them to discover how manhood may be accelerated, or old age retarded, yet surely, if they be considered only as the amusements of curiosity, they are of equal importance with conjectures on things more remote, with catalogues of the fixed stars, and calculations of the bulk of planets.

It had been a task worthy of the moral philosophers to have considered with equal care the climacterics of the mind; to have pointed out the time at which every passion begins and ceases to predomi-

nate, and noted the regular variations of desire, and the succession of one appetite to another.

The periods of mental change are not to be stated with equal certainty: our bodies grow up under the care of nature, and depend so little on our own management, that something more than negligence is necessary to discompose their structure, or impede their vigour. But our minds are committed, in a great measure, first to the direction of others, and afterwards of ourselves. It would be difficult to protract the weakness of infancy beyond the usual time, but the mind may be very easily hindered from its share of improvement, and the bulk and strength of manhood must, without the assistance of education and instruction, be informed only with the understanding of a child.

Yet, amidst all the disorder and inequality which variety of discipline, example, conversation, and employment produce in the intellectual advances of different men, there is still discovered by a vigilant spectator, such a general and remote similitude, as may be expected in the same common nature affected by external circumstances indefinitely varied. We all enter the world in equal ignorance, gaze round about us on the same objects, and have our first pains and pleasures, our first hopes and fears, our first aversions and desires, from the same causes; and though, as we proceed further, life opens wider prospects to our view, and accidental impulses determine us to different paths, yet as every mind, however vigorous or abstracted, is necessitated, in its present state of union, to receive its informations, and execute its purposes, by the intervention of the body, the uniformity of our corporeal nature communicates itself to our intellectual operations; and those whose abilities or knowledge inclines

them most to deviate from the general round of life, are recalled from eccentricity by the laws of their existence.

If we consider the exercises of the mind, it will be found that in each part of life some particular faculty is more eminently employed. When the treasures of knowledge are first opened before us, while novelty blooms alike on either hand, and every thing equally unknown and unexamined seems of equal value, the power of the soul is principally exerted in a vivacious and desultory curiosity. She applies by turns to every object, enjoys it for a short time, and flies with equal ardour to another. She delights to catch up loose and unconnected ideas, but starts away from systems and complications which would obstruct the rapidity of her transitions, and detain her long in the same pursuit.

When a number of distinct images are collected by these erratic and hasty surveys, the fancy is busied in arranging them; and combines them into pleasing pictures with more resemblance to the realities of life as experience advances, and new observations rectify the former. While the judgment is yet uninformed and unable to compare the draughts of fiction with their originals, we are delighted with improbable adventures, impracticable virtues, and inimitable characters; but in proportion as we have more opportunities of acquainting ourselves with living nature, we are soon disgusted with copies in which there appears no resemblance. We first discard absurdity and impossibility, then exact greater and greater degrees of probability, but at last become cold and insensible to the charms of falsehood, however speciôus, and from the imitations of truth, which are never perfect, transfer our affection to truth itself.

Now commences the reign of judgment or reason; we begin to find little pleasure but in comparing arguments, stating propositions, disentangling perplexities, clearing ambiguities, and deducing consequences. The painted vales of imagination are deserted, and our intellectual activity is exercised in winding through the labyrinths of fallacy, and toiling with firm and cautious steps up the narrow tracks of demonstration. Whatever may lull vigilance, or mislead attention, is contemptuously rejected, and every disguise in which error may be concealed, is carefully observed, till by degrees a certain number of incontestable or unsuspected propositions are established, and at last concatenated into arguments, or compacted into systems.

At length weariness succeeds to labour, and the mind lies at ease in the contemplation of her own attainments, without any desire of new conquests or excursions. This is the age of recollection and narrative; the opinions are settled, and the avenues of apprehension shut against any new intelligence; the days that are to follow must pass in the inculcation of precepts already collected, and assertion of tenets already received; nothing is henceforward so odious as opposition, so insolent as doubt, or so dangerous as novelty.

In like manner, the passions usurp the separate command of the successive periods of life. To the happiness of our first years nothing more seems necessary than freedom from restraint: every man may remember that if he was left to himself, and indulged in the disposal of his own time, he was once content without the superaddition of any actual pleasure. The new world is itself a banquet; and till we have exhausted the freshness of life, we have always

about us sufficient gratifications; the sunshine quickens us to play, and the shade invites us to sleep.

But we soon become unsatisfied with negative felicity, and are solicited by our senses and appetites to more powerful delights, as the taste of him who has satisfied his hunger must be excited by artificial stimulations. The simplicity of natural amusement is now past, and art and contrivance must improve our pleasures; but in time, art, like nature, is exhausted, and the senses can no longer supply the cravings of the intellect.

The attention is then transferred from pleasure to interest, in which pleasure is, perhaps, included, though diffused to a wider extent, and protracted through new gradations. Nothing now dances before the eyes but wealth and power, nor rings in the ear but the voice of fame; wealth to which, however, variously denominated, every man at some time or other aspires; power, which all wish to obtain within their circle of action; and fame, which no man, however high or mean, however wise or ignorant, was yet able to despise. Now prudence and foresight exert their influence; no hour is devoted wholly to any present enjoyment, no act or purpose terminates in itself, but every motion is referred to some distant end; the accomplishment of one design begins another, and the ultimate wish is always pushed off to its former distance.

At length fame is observed to be uncertain, and power to be dangerous; the man whose vigour and alacrity begin to forsake him, by degrees contracts his designs, remits his former multiplicity of pursuits, and extends no longer his regard to any other honour than the reputation of wealth, or any other influence than its power. Avarice is generally the last passion of those lives of which the first part has

been squandered in pleasure, and the second devoted to ambition. He that sinks under the fatigue of getting wealth, lulls his age with the milder business of saving it.

I have in this view of life considered men as actuated only by natural desires, and yielding to their own inclinations, without regard to superior principles by which the force of external agents may be counteracted, and the temporary prevalence of passions restrained. Nature will, indeed, always operate, human desires will be always ranging; but these motions, though very powerful, are not resistless; nature may be regulated, and desires governed; and to contend with the predominance of successive passions, to be endangered first by one affection, and then by another, is the condition upon which we are to pass our time, the time of our preparation for that state which shall put an end to experiment, to disappointment, and to change.

No. 152. SATURDAY, AUGUST 31, 1751.

—Tristia mœstum
Vultum verba decent, iratum plena minarum.
HOR. ARS POET. 105.

Disastrous words can best disaster show;
In angry phrase the angry passions glow.
ELPHINSTON.

'It was the wisdom,' says Seneca, 'of ancient times, to consider what is most useful as most illus-

trious.' If this rule be applied to works of genius, scarcely any species of composition deserves more to be cultivated than the epistolary style, since none is of more various or frequent use, through the whole subordination of human life.

It has yet happened that among the numerous writers which our nation has produced, equal perhaps always in force and genius, and of late in elegance and accuracy, to those of any other country, very few have endeavoured to distinguish themselves by the publication of letters, except such as were written in the discharge of public trusts, and during the transaction of great affairs; which, though they afford precedents to the minister, and memorials to the historian, are of no use as examples of the familiar style, or models of private correspondence.

If it be inquired by foreigners, how this deficiency has happened in the literature of a country, where all indulge themselves with so little danger in speaking and writing, may we not without either bigotry or arrogance inform them, that it must be imputed to our contempt of trifles, and our due sense of the dignity of the public? We do not think it reasonable to fill the world with volumes from which nothing can be learned, nor expect that the employments of the busy, or the amusements of the gay, should give way to narratives of our private affairs, complaints of absence, expressions of fondness, or declarations of fidelity.

A slight perusal of the innumerable letters by which the wits of France have signalized their names, will prove that other nations need not be discouraged from the like attempts by the consciousness of inability; for surely it is not very difficult to aggravate trifling misfortunes, to magnify familiar incidents, repeat adulatory professions, accumulate

servile hyperboles, and produce all that can be found in the despicable remains of Voiture and Scarron.

Yet as much of life must be passed in affairs considerable only by their frequent occurrence, and much of the pleasure which our condition allows, must be produced by giving elegance to trifles, it is necessary to learn how to become little without becoming mean, to maintain the necessary intercourse of civility, and fill up the vacuities of action by agreeable appearances. It had, therefore, been of advantage, if such of our writers as have excelled in the art of decorating insignificance, had supplied us with a few sallies of innocent gayety, effusions of honest tenderness, or exclamations of unimportant hurry.

Precept has generally been posterior to performance. The art of composing works of genius has never been taught but by the example of those who performed it by natural vigour of imagination, and rectitude of judgment. As we have few letters, we have likewise few criticisms upon the epistolary style. The observations with which Walsh has introduced his pages of inanity, are such as give him little claim to the rank assigned him by Dryden, among the critics. "Letters," says he, "are intended as resemblances of conversation, and the chief excellences of conversation, are good-humour and good-breeding." This remark, equally valuable for its novelty and propriety, he dilates and enforces with an appearance of complete acquiescence in his own discovery.

No man was ever in doubt about the moral qualities of a letter. It has been always known that he who endeavours to please must appear pleased, and he who would not provoke rudeness must not practise it. But the question among those who establish

rules for an epistolary performance is, how gayety or civility may be properly expressed; as among the critics in history it is not contested whether truth ought to be preserved, but by what mode of diction it is best adorned.

As letters are written on all subjects, in all states of mind, they cannot be properly reduced to settled rules, or described by any single characteristic; and we may safely disentangle our minds from critical embarrassments, by determining that a letter has no peculiarity but its form, and that nothing is to be refused admission, which would be proper in any other method of treating the same subject. The qualities of the epistolary style most frequently required are ease and simplicity, an even flow of unlaboured diction, and an artless arrangement of obvious sentiments. But these directions are no sooner applied to use, than their scantiness and imperfection become evident. Letters are written to the great and to the mean, to the learned and the ignorant, at rest and in distress, in sport and in passion. Nothing can be more improper than ease and laxity of expression, when the importance of the subject impresses solicitude, or the dignity of the person exacts reverence.

That letters should be written with strict conformity to nature is true, because nothing but conformity to nature can make any composition beautiful or just. But it is natural to depart from familiarity of language upon occasions not familiar. Whatever elevates the sentiments will consequently raise the expression; whatever fills us with hope or terror, will produce some perturbation of images, and some figurative distortions of praise. Wherever we are studious to please, we are afraid of trusting our first thoughts, and endeavour to recommend our opinion

by studied ornaments, accuracy of method, and elegance of style.

If the personages of the comic scene be allowed by Horace to raise their language in the transports of anger to the turgid vehemence of tragedy, the epistolary writer may likewise, without censure, comply with the varieties of his matter. If great events are to be related, he may, with all the solemnity of an historian, deduce them from their causes, connect them with their concomitants, and trace them to their consequences. If a disputed position is to be established, or a remote principle to be investigated, he may detail his reasonings with all the nicety of syllogistic method. If a menace is to be averted, or a benefit implored, he may, without any violation of the edicts of criticism, call every power of rhetoric to his assistance, and try every inlet at which love or pity enters the heart.

Letters that have no other end than the entertainment of the correspondent are more properly regulated by critical precepts, because the matter and style are equally arbitrary, and rules are more necessary, as there is a larger power of choice. In letters of this kind, some conceive art graceful, and others think negligence amiable; some model them by the sonnet, and will allow them no means of delighting but the soft lapse of calm mellifluence; others adjust them by the epigram, and expect pointed sentences and forcible periods. The one party considers exemption from faults as the height of excellence, the other looks upon neglect of excellence as the most disgusting fault; one avoids censure, the other aspires to praise; one is always in danger of insipidity, the other continually on the brink of affectation.

When the subject has no intrinsic dignity, it must

necessarily owe its attractions to artifical embellishments, and may catch at all advantages which the art of writing can supply. He that, like Pliny, sends his friend a portion for his daughter, will, without Pliny's eloquence or address, find means of exciting gratitude and securing acceptance; but he that has no present to make but a garland, a ribbon, or some petty curiosity, must endeavour to recommend it by his manner of giving it.

The purpose for which letters are written when no intelligence is communicated, or business transacted, is to preserve in the minds of the absent either love or esteem; to excite love we must impart pleasure, and to raise esteem we must discover abilities. Pleasure will generally be given, as abilities are displayed by scenes of imagery, points of conceit, unexpected sallies, and artful compliments. Trifles always require exuberance of ornament; the building which has no strength can be valued only for the grace of its decorations. The pebble must be polished with care, which hopes to be valued as a diamond; and words ought surely to be laboured, when they are intended to stand for things.

No. 153. TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1751.

Turba Remi sequitur fortunam, ut semper, et odit
Damnatos.— JUV. SAT. X. 73.

The fickle crowd with fortune comes and goes;
Wealth still finds followers, and misfortune foes.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

"THERE are occasions on which all apology is rudeness. He that has an unwelcome message to deliver, may give some proof of tenderness and delicacy, by a ceremonial introduction and gradual discovery, because the mind upon which the weight of sorrow is to fall, gains time for the collection of its powers; but nothing is more absurd than to delay the communication of pleasure, to torment curiosity by impatience, and to delude hope by anticipation.

"I shall, therefore, forbear the arts by which correspondents generally secure admission, for I have too long remarked the power of vanity, to doubt that I shall be read by you with a disposition to approve, when I declare that my narrative has no other tendency than to illustrate and corroborate your own observations.

"I was the second son of a gentleman, whose patrimony had been wasted by a long succession of squanderers, till he was unable to support any of his children, except his heir, in the hereditary dignity of idleness. Being, therefore, obliged to employ that part of life in study which my progenitors had

devoted to the hawk and hound, I was in my eighteenth year dispatched to the university, without any rural honours. I had never killed a single woodcock, nor partaken one triumph over a conquered fox.

"At the university, I continued to enlarge my acquisitions with little envy of the noisy happiness which my elder brother had the fortune to enjoy, and having obtained my degree, retired to consider at leisure to what profession I should confine that application which had hitherto been dissipated in general knowledge. To deliberate upon a choice which custom and honour forbid to be retracted, is certainly reasonable, yet to let loose the attention equally to the advantages and inconveniences of every employment is not without danger; new motives are every moment operating on every side; and mechanics have long ago discovered, that contrariety of equal attractions is equivalent to rest.

"While I was thus trifling in uncertainty, an old adventurer, who had been once the intimate friend of my father, arrived from the Indies with a large fortune; which he had so much harassed himself in obtaining, that sickness and infirmity left him no other desire than to die in his native country. His wealth easily procured him an invitation to pass his life with us, and being incapable of any amusement but conversation, he necessarily became familiarized to me, whom he found studious and domestic. Pleased with an opportunity of imparting my knowledge, and eager of any intelligence that might increase it, I delighted his curiosity with historical narratives and explications of nature, and gratified his vanity by inquiries after the products of distant countries, and the customs of their inhabitants.

"My brother saw how much I advanced in the favour of our guest, who being without heirs, was naturally expected to enrich the family of his friend, but neither attempted to alienate me, nor to ingratiate himself. He was, indeed, little qualified to solicit the affection of a traveller, for the remissness of his education had left him without any rule of action, but his present humour. He often forsook the old gentleman in the midst of an adventure, because the horn sounded in the court-yard, and would have lost an opportunity, not only of knowing the history, but sharing the wealth of the mogul, for the trial of a new pointer, or the sight of a horserace.

"It was, therefore, not long before our new friend declared his intention of bequeathing to me the profits of his commerce, as the only man in the family by whom he could expect them to be rationally enjoyed. This distinction drew upon me the envy not only of my brother but my father.

"As no man is willing to believe that he suffers by his own fault, they imputed the preference which I had obtained to adulatory compliances or malignant calumnies. To no purpose did I call upon my patron to attest my innocence, for who will believe what he wishes to be false? In the heat of disappointment they forced their inmate, by repeated insults, to depart from the house, and I was soon, by the same treatment, obliged to follow him.

"He chose his residence in the confines of London, where rest, tranquillity, and medicine, restored him to part of the health which he had lost. I pleased myself with perceiving that I was not likely to obtain an immediate possession of wealth which no labour of mine had contributed to acquire; and that he, who had thus distinguished me, might hope to end his life without a total frustration of those

blessings, which, whatever be their real value, he had sought with so much diligence, and purchased with so many vicissitudes of danger and fatigue.

"He, indeed, left me no reason to repine at his recovery, for he was willing to accustom me early to the use of money, and set apart for my expenses such a revenue as I had scarcely dared to image. I can yet congratulate myself that fortune has seen her golden cup once tasted without inebriation. Neither my modesty nor prudence were overwhelmed by affluence; my elevation was without insolence, and my expense without profusion. Employing the influence which money always confers to the improvement of my understanding, I mingled in parties of gayety, and in conferences of learning, appeared in every place where instruction was to be found, and imagined that, by ranging through all the diversities of life, I had acquainted myself fully with human nature, and learned all that was to be known of the ways of men.

"It happened, however, that I soon discovered how much was wanted to the completion of my knowledge, and found that, according to Seneca's remark, I had hitherto seen the world but on one side. My patron's confidence in his increase of strength tempted him to carelessness and irregularity; he caught a fever by riding in the rain, of which he died delirious on the third day. I buried him without any of the heir's affected grief or secret exultation; then preparing to take a legal possession of his fortune, opened his closet, where I found a will, made at his first arrival, by which my father was appointed the chief inheritor, and nothing was left me but a legacy sufficient to support me in the prosecution of my studies.

"I had not yet found such charms in prosperity as

to continue it by any act of forgery or injustice, and made haste to inform my father of the riches which had been given him, not by the preference of kindness, but by the delays of indolence and cowardice of age. The hungry family flew like vultures on their prey, and soon made my disappointment public by the tumult of their claims and the splendor of their sorrow.

"It was now my part to consider how I should repair the disappointment. I could not but triumph in my long list of friends, which comprised almost every name that power or knowledge entitled to eminence, and in the prospect of the innumerable roads to honour and preferment, which I had laid open to myself by the wise use of temporary riches. I believed nothing necessary but that I should continue that acquaintance to which I had been so readily admitted, which had hitherto been cultivated on both sides with equal ardour.

"Full of these expectations, I one morning ordered a chair, with an intention to make my usual circle of morning visits. Where I first stopped, I saw two footmen lolling at the door, who told me, without any change of posture, or collection of countenance, that their master was at home; and suffered me to open the inner door, without assistance. I found my friend standing, and as I was tattling with my former freedom, was formally entreated to sit down; but did not stay to be favoured with any further condescensions.

"My next experiment was made at the levee of a statesman, who received me with an embrace of tenderness, that he might with more decency publish my change of fortune to the sycophants about him. After he had enjoyed the triumph of condolence, he turned to a wealthy stockjobber, and left me ex-

posed to the scorn of those who had lately courted my notice, and solicited my interest.

"I was then set down at the door of another, who, upon my entrance, advised me with great solemnity to think of some settled provision for life. I left him, and hurried away to an old friend, who professed himself unsusceptible of any impressions from prosperity or misfortune, and begged that he might see me when he was more at leisure.

"Of sixty-seven doors at which I knocked in the first week after my appearance in a mourning dress, I was denied admission at forty-six; was suffered at fourteen to wait in the outer room till business was dispatched; at four was entertained with a few questions about the weather; at one heard the footman rated for bringing my name; and at two was informed, in the flow of casual conversation, how much a man of rank degrades himself by mean company.

"My curiosity now led me to try what reception I should find among the ladies; but I found that my patron had carried all my powers of pleasing to the grave. I had formerly been celebrated as a wit, and not perceiving any languor in my imagination, I essayed to revive that gayety which had hitherto broken out involuntarily before my sentences were finished. My remarks were now heard with a steady countenance, and if a girl happened to give way to habitual merriment, her forwardness was repressed with a frown by her mother or her aunt.

"Wherever I come, I scatter infirmity and disease; every lady whom I meet in the Mall is too weary to walk; all whom I entreat to sing are troubled with colds: if I propose cards, they are afflicted with the headache; if I invite them to the gardens, they cannot bear a crowd.

"All this might be endured; but there is a class of mortals who think my understanding impaired with my fortune, exalt themselves to the dignity of advice, and whenever we happen to meet, presume to prescribe my conduct, regulate my economy, and direct my pursuits. Another race, equally impertinent and equally despicable, are every moment recommending to me an attention to my interest, and think themselves entitled, by their superior prudence, to reproach me if I speak or move without regard to profit.

"Such, Mr. Rambler, is the power of wealth, that it commands the ear of greatness and the eye of beauty, gives spirit to the dull and authority to the timorous, and leaves him from whom it departs, without virtue and without understanding, the sport of caprice, the scoff of insolence, the slave of meanness, and the pupil of ignorance.

"I am," &c.,

No. 154. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1751.

—Tibi res antiquæ laudis et artis
Ingredior, sanctos ausus recludere fontes.
VIRG. GEORG. ii. 174.

For thee my tuneful accents will I raise,
And treat of arts disclosed in ancient days;
Once more unlock for thee the sacred spring.
DRYDEN.

The direction of Aristotle to those that study politics, is, first to examine and understand what has

been written by the ancients upon government; then to cast their eyes round upon the world, and consider by what causes the prosperity of communities is visibly influenced, and why some are worse, and others better administered.

The same method must be pursued by him who hopes to become eminent in any other part of knowledge. The first task is to search books, the next to contemplate nature. He must first possess himself of the intellectual treasures which the diligence of former ages has accumulated, and then endeavour to increase them, by his own collections.

The mental disease of the present generation, is impatience of study, contempt of the great masters of ancient wisdom, and a disposition to rely wholly upon unassisted genius and natural sagacity. The wits of these happy days have discovered a way to fame, which the dull caution of our laborious ancestors durst never attempt; they cut the knots of sophistry, which it was formerly the business of years to untie, solve difficulties by sudden irradiations of intelligence, and comprehend long processes of argument by immediate intuition.

Men who have flattered themselves into this opinion of their own abilities, look down on all who waste their lives over books, as a race of inferior beings condemned by nature to perpetual pupilage, and fruitlessly endeavouring to remedy their barrenness by incessant cultivation, or succour their feebleness by subsidiary strength. They presume that none would be more industrious than they, if they were not more sensible of deficiences; and readily conclude, that he who places no confidence in his own powers, owes his modesty only to his weakness.

It is, however, certain that no estimate is more in danger of erroneous calculations than those by which

a man computes the force of his own genius. It generally happens at our entrance into the world, that, by the natural attraction of similitude, we associate with men like ourselves, young, sprightly, and ignorant, and rate our accomplishments by comparison with theirs; when we have once obtained an acknowledged superiority over our acquaintances, imagination and desire easily extended over the rest of mankind, and if no accident forces us into new emulations, we grow old, and die in admiration of ourselves.

Vanity, thus confirmed in her dominion, readily listens to the voice of idleness, and soothes the slumber of life with continual dreams of excellence and greatness. A man elated by confidence in his natural vigour of fancy and sagacity of conjecture, soon concludes that he already possesses whatever toil and inquiry can confer. He then listens with eagerness to the wild objections which folly has raised against the common means of improvement; talks of the dark chaos of indigested knowledge; describes the mischievous effects of heterogeneous sciences fermenting in the mind; relates the blunders of lettered ignorance; expatiates on the heroic merit of those who deviate from prescription, or shake off authority; and gives vent to the inflations of his heart by declaring that he owes nothing to pedants and universities.

All these pretensions, however confident, are very often vain. The laurels which superficial acuteness gains in triumphs over ignorance, unsupported by vivacity, are observed, by Locke, to be lost, whenever real learning and rational diligence appear against her; the sallies of gayety are soon repressed by calm confidence; and the artifices of subtilty are readily detected by those who, having carefully

studied the question, are not easily confounded or surprised.

But though the contemner of books had neither been deceived by others nor himself, and was really born with a genius surpassing the ordinary abilities of mankind; yet surely such gifts of Providence may be more properly urged as incitements to labour, than encouragements to negligence. He that neglects the culture of ground naturally fertile, is more shamefully culpable than he whose field would scarcely recompense his husbandry.

Cicero remarks, that not to know what has been transacted in former times, is to continue always a child. If no use is made of the labours of past ages, the world must remain always in the infancy of knowledge. The discoveries of every man must terminate in his own advantage, and the studies of every age be employed on questions which the past generation had discussed and determined. We may, with as little reproach, borrow science as manufactures from our ancestors; and it is as rational to live in caves till our own hands have erected a palace, as to reject all knowledge of architecture, which our understandings will not supply.

To the strongest and quickest mind it is far easier to learn than to invent. The principles of arithmetic and geometry may be comprehended by a close attention in a few days; yet who can flatter himself that the study of a long life would have enabled him to discover them, when he sees them yet unknown to so many nations, whom he cannot suppose less liberally endowed with natural reason, than the Grecians or Egyptians.

Every science was thus far advanced towards perfection, by the emulous diligence of contemporary students, and the gradual discoveries of one age im-

proving on another. Sometimes unexpected flashes of instruction were struck out by the fortuitous collision of happy incidents, or an involuntary concurrence of ideas, in which the philosopher to whom they happened had no other merit than that of knowing their value, and transmitting, unclouded, to posterity, that light which had been kindled by causes out of his power. The happiness of these casual illuminations no man can promise to himself, because no endeavours can procure them; and therefore, whatever be our abilities or application, we must submit to learn from others what, perhaps, would have lain hid forever from human penetration, had not some remote inquiry brought it to view; as treasures are thrown up by the ploughman and the digger in the rude exercise of their common occupations.

The man whose genius qualifies him for great undertakings must, at least, be content to learn from books the present state of human knowledge; that he may not ascribe to himself the invention of arts generally known; weary his attention with experiments of which the event has been long registered; and waste, in attempts which have already succeeded or miscarried, that time which might have been spent with usefulness and honour upon new undertakings.

But though the study of books is necessary, it is not sufficient to constitute literary eminence. He that wishes to be counted among the benefactors of posterity, must add by his own toil to the acquisitions of his ancestors, and secure his memory from neglect by some valuable improvement. This can only be effected by looking out upon the wastes of the intellectual world, and extending the power of learning over regions yet undisciplined and barbarous; or by

surveying more exactly her ancient dominions, and driving ignorance from the fortresses and retreats where she skulks undetected and undisturbed. Every science has its difficulties which yet call for solution before we attempt new systems of knowledge; as every country has its forests and marshes, which it would be wise to cultivate and drain, before distant colonies are projected as a necessary discharge of the exuberance of inhabitants.

No man ever yet became great by imitation. Whatever hopes for the veneration of mankind, must have invention in the design or the execution; either the effect must itself be new, or the means by which it is produced. Either truths hitherto unknown must be discovered, or those which are already known enforced by stronger evidence, facilitated by clearer method, or elucidated by brighter illustrations.

Fame cannot spread wide or endure long that is not rooted in nature, and manured by art. That which hopes to resist the blast of malignity, and stand firm against the attacks of time, must contain in itself some original principle of growth. The reputation which arises from the detail or transposition of borrowed sentiments, may spread for a while, like ivy on the rind of antiquity, but will be torn away by accident or contempt, and suffered to rot unheeded on the ground.

No. 155. TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1751.

—Steriles transmisimus annos,
Hæc ævi mihi prima dies, hæc limina vitæ. STAT.

—Our barren years are past;
Be this of life the first, of sloth the last.
ELPHINSTON.

No weakness of the human mind has more frequently incurred animadversion, than the negligence with which men overlook their own faults, however flagrant, and the easiness with which they pardon them, however frequently repeated.

It seems generally believed, that, as the eye cannot see itself, the mind has no faculties by which it can contemplate its own state, and that, therefore, we have not means of becoming acquainted with our real characters; an opinion which, like innumerable other postulates, an inquirer finds himself inclined to admit upon very little evidence, because it affords a ready solution of many difficulties. It will explain why the greatest abilities frequently fail to promote the happiness of those who possess them; why those who can distinguish with the utmost nicety the boundaries of vice and virtue, suffer them to be confounded in their own conduct; why the active and vigilant resign their affairs implicitly to the management of others; and why the cautious and fearful make hourly approaches towards ruin, without one sigh of solicitude or struggle for escape.

When a possession teems thus with commodious

consequences, who can without regret confess it to be false? Yet it is certain that declaimers have indulged a disposition to describe the dominion of the passions as extended beyond the limits that nature assigned. Self-love is often rather arrogant than blind; it does not hide our faults from ourselves, but persuades us that they escape the notice of others, and disposes us to resent censures lest we should confess them to be just. We are secretly conscious of defects and vices which we hope to conceal from the public eye, and please ourselves with innumerable impostures, by which, in reality, nobody is deceived.

In proof of the dimness of our internal sight, or the general inability of man to determine rightly concerning his own character, it is common to urge the success of the most absurd and incredible flattery, and the resentment always raised by advice, however soft, benevolent, and reasonable. But flattery, if its operation be nearly examined, will be found to owe its acceptance, not to our ignorance but knowledge of our failures, and to delight us rather as it consoles our wants than displays our possessions. He that shall solicit the favour of his patron by praising him for qualities which he can find in himself, will be defeated by the more daring panegyrist who enriches him with adscititious excellence. Just praise is only a debt, but flattery is a present. The acknowledgment of those virtues on which conscience congratulates us, is a tribute that we can at any time exact with confidence; but the celebration of those which we only feign, or desire without any vigorous endeavours to attain them, is received as a confession of sovereignty over the regions never conquered, as a favourable decision of disputable claims, and is more welcome as it is more gratuitous.

Advice is offensive, not because it lays us open to unexpected regret, or convicts us of any fault which had escaped our notice, but because it shows us that we are known to others as well as to ourselves; and the officious monitor is persecuted with hatred, not because his accusation is false, but because he assumes that superiority which we are not willing to grant him, and has dared to detect what we desired to conceal.

For this reason advice is commonly ineffectual. If those who follow the call of their desires, without inquiry whither they are going, had deviated ignorantly from the paths of wisdom, and were rushing upon dangers unforeseen, they would readily listen to information that recalls them from their errors, and catch the first alarm by which destruction or infamy is denounced. Few that wander in the wrong way mistake it for the right; they only find it more smooth and flowery, and indulge their own choice rather than approve it; therefore, few are persuaded to quit it by admonition or reproof, since it impresses no new conviction, nor confers any powers of action or resistance. He that is gravely informed how soon profusion will annihilate his fortune, hears with little advantage what he knew before, and catches at the next occasion of expense, because advice has no force to suppress his vanity. He that is told how certainly intemperance will hurry him to the grave, runs with his usual speed to a new course of luxury, because his reason is not invigorated, nor his appetite weakened.

The mischief of flattery is, not that it persuades any man that he is what he is not, but that it suppresses the influence of honest ambition, by raising an opinion that honour may be gained without the toil of merit; and the benefit of advice arises com-

monly, not from any new light imparted to the mind, but from the discovery which it affords of the public suffrages. He that could withstand conscience is frighted at infamy, and shame prevails when reason is defeated.

As we all know our own faults, and know them commonly with many aggravations which human perspicacity cannot discover, there is, perhaps, no man, however hardened by impudence or dissipated by levity, sheltered by hypocrisy or blasted by disgrace, who does not intend some time to review his conduct, and to regulate the remainder of his life by the laws of virtue. New temptations indeed attack him, new invitations are offered by pleasure and interest, and the hour of reformation is always delayed; every day gives vice another opportunity of fortifying itself by habit; and the change of manners, though sincerely intended and rationally planned, is referred to the time when some craving passion shall be fully gratified, or some powerful allurement cease its importunity.

Thus procrastination is accumulated on procrastination, and one impediment succeeds another, till age shatters our resolution, or death intercepts the project of amendment. Such is often the end of salutary purposes, after they have long delighted the imagination, and appeased that disquiet which every mind feels from known misconduct, when the attention is not diverted by business or by pleasure.

Nothing surely can be more unworthy of a reasonable nature, than to continue in a state so opposite to real happiness, as that all the peace of solitude, and felicity of meditation, must arise from resolutions of forsaking it. Yet the world will often afford examples of men, who pass months and years in a continual war with their own convictions, and are daily

dragged by habit, or betrayed by passion, into practices which they closed and opened their eyes with purposes to avoid; purposes which, though settled on conviction, the first impulse of momentary desire totally overthrows.

The influence of custom is, indeed, such, that to conquer it will require the utmost efforts of fortitude and virtue; nor can I think any man more worthy of veneration and renown, than those who have burst the shackles of habitual vice. This victory, however, has different degrees of glory as of difficulty; it is more heroic as the objects of guilty gratification are more familiar, and the recurrence of solicitation more frequent. He that, from experience of the folly of ambition, resigns his offices, may set himself free at once from temptation to squander his life in courts, because he cannot regain his former station. He who is enslaved by an amorous passion, may quit his tyrant in disgust, and absence will, without the help of reason, overcome, by degrees, the desire of returning. But those appetites to which every place affords their proper object, and which require no preparatory measures or gradual advances, are more tenaciously adhesive; the wish is so near the enjoyment, that compliance often precedes consideration, and before the powers of reason can be summoned, the time for employing them is past.

Indolence is, therefore, one of the vices from which those whom it once infects are seldom reformed. Every other species of luxury operates upon some appetite that is quickly satiated, and requires some concurrence of art or accident which every place will not supply; but the desire of ease acts equally at all hours, and the longer it is indulged is the more increased. To do nothing is in every man's power; we can never want an opportunity of omitting duties.

The lapse to indolence is soft and imperceptible, because it is only a mere cessation of activity; but the return to diligence is difficult, because it implies a change from rest to motion, from privation to reality.

> —*Facilis descensus Averni:*
> *Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis;*
> *Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras,*
> *Hoc opus, hic labor est.*— VIRG. ÆN. vi. 126.

> The gates of hell are open night and day;
> Smooth the descent, and easy is the way;
> But to return, and view the cheerful skies,
> In this the task and mighty labour lies. DRYDEN.

Of this vice, as of all others, every man who indulges it is conscious; we all know our own state, if we could be induced to consider it; and it might, perhaps, be useful to the conquest of all these insnarers of the mind, if at certain stated days life was reviewed. Many things necessary are omitted, because we vainly imagine that they may be always performed; and what cannot be done without pain will forever be delayed, if the time of doing it be left unsettled. No corruption is great but by long negligence, which can scarcely prevail in a mind regularly and frequently awakened by periodical remorse. He that thus breaks his life into parts, will find in himself a desire to distinguish every stage of his existence by some improvement, and delight himself with the approach of the day of recollection, as of the time which is to begin a new series of virtue and felicity.

No. 156. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1751.

Nunquam aliud, natura, aliud sapientia dicit.
JUV. SAT. xiv. 321.

For Wisdom ever echoes Nature's voice.

EVERY government, say the politicians, is perpetually degenerating towards corruption, from which it must be rescued at certain periods by the resuscitation of its first principles, and the re-establishment of its original constitution. Every animal body, according to the methodic physicians, is, by the predominance of some exuberant quality, continually declining towards disease and death, which must be obviated by a seasonable reduction of the peccant humour to the just equipoise which health requires.

In the same manner the studies of mankind, all at least which, not being subject to rigorous demonstration, admit the influence of fancy and caprice, are perpetually tending to error, and confusion. Of the great principles of truth which the first speculatists discovered, the simplicity is embarrassed by ambitious additions, or the evidence obscured by inaccurate argumentation; and as they descend from one succession of writers to another, like light transmitted from room to room, they lose their strength and splendor, and fade at last in total evanescence.

The systems of learning therefore must be sometimes reviewed, complications analyzed into principles, and knowledge disentangled from opinion.

It is not always possible, without a close inspection, to separate the genuine shoots of consequential reasoning, which grow out of some radical postulate, from the branches which art has engrafted on it. The accidental prescriptions of authority, when time has procured them veneration, are often confounded with the laws of nature, and those rules are supposed coeval with reason, of which the first rise cannot be discovered.

Criticism has sometimes permitted fancy to dictate the laws by which fancy ought to be restrained, and fallacy to perplex the principles by which fallacy is to be detected; her superintendence of others has betrayed her to negligence of herself; and, like the ancient Scythians, by extending her conquests over distant regions, she has left her throne vacant to her slaves.

Among the laws of which the desire of extending authority, or ardour of promoting knowledge, has prompted the prescription, all which writers have received, had not the same original right to our regard. Some are to be considered as fundamental and indispensable, others only as useful and convenient; some as dictated by reason and necessity, others as enacted by despotic antiquity; some as invincibly supported by their conformity to the order of nature and operations of the intellect; others as formed by accident, or instituted by example, and, therefore, always liable to dispute and alternation.

That many rules have been advanced without consulting nature or reason, we cannot but suspect when we find it peremptorily decreed by the ancient masters, that only three speaking personages should appear at once upon the stage; a law which, as the variety and intricacy of modern plays has made it impossible to be observed, we now violate without

scruple, and, as experience proves, without inconvenience.

The original of this precept was merely accidental. Tragedy was a monody, or solitary song in honour of Bacchus, improved afterwards into a dialogue by the addition of another speaker; but the ancients, remembering that the tragedy was at first pronounced only by one, durst not for some time venture beyond two; at last, when custom and impunity had made them daring, they extended their liberty to the admission of three, but restrained themselves by a critical edict from further exorbitance.

By what accident the number of acts was limited to five, I know not that any author has informed us; but certainly it is not determined by any necessity arising either from the nature of action or propriety of exhibition. An act is only the representation of such a part of the business of the play as proceeds in an unbroken tenor, or without any intermediate pause. Nothing is more evident than that of every real, and by consequence of every dramatic action, the intervals may be more or fewer than five; and indeed the rule is upon the English stage every day broken in effect, without any other mischief than that which arises from an absurd endeavour to observe it in appearance. Whenever the scene is shifted the act ceases, since some time is necessarily supposed to elapse while the personages of the drama change their place.

With no greater right to our obedience have the critics confined the dramatic action to a certain number of hours. Probability requires that the time of action should approach somewhat nearly to that of exhibition, and those plays will always be thought most happily conducted which crowd the greatest

variety into the least space. But since it will frequently happen that some delusion must be admitted, I know not where the limits of imagination can be fixed. It is rarely observed that minds, not prepossessed by mechanical criticism, feel any offence from the extension of the intervals between the acts; nor can I conceive it absurd or impossible, that he who can multiply three hours into twelve or twenty-four, might image, with equal ease, a greater number.

I know not whether he that professes to regard no other laws than those of nature, will not be inclined to receive tragi-comedy to his protection, whom, however generally condemned, her own laurels have hitherto shaded from the fulminations of criticism. For what is there in the mingled drama which impartial reason can condemn? The connection of important with trivial incidents, since it is not only common but perpetual in the world, may surely be allowed upon the stage, which pretends only to be the mirror of life. The impropriety of suppressing passions before we have raised them to the intended agitation, and of diverting the expectation from an event which we keep suspended only to raise it, may be speciously urged. But will not experience show this objection to be rather subtle than just? Is it not certain that the tragic and comic affections have been moved alternately with equal force, and that no plays have oftener filled the eye with tears, and the breast with palpitation, than those which are variegated with interludes of mirth?

I do not, however, think it safe to judge of works of genius merely by the event. The resistless vicissitudes of the heart, this alternate prevalence of merriment and solemnity, may sometimes be more properly ascribed to the vigour of the writer than

the justness of the design: and, instead of vindicating tragi-comedy by the success of Shakspeare, we ought, perhaps, to pay new honours to that transcendent and unbounded genius that could preside over the passions in sport; who, to actuate the affections, needed not the slow gradation of common means, but could fill the heart with instantaneous jollity or sorrow, and vary our disposition as he changed his scenes. Perhaps the effects even of Shakspeare's poetry might have been yet greater, had he not counteracted himself; and we might have been more interested in the distresses of his heroes, had we not been so frequently diverted by the jokes of his buffoons.

There are other rules more fixed and obligatory. It is necessary that of every play the chief action should be single; for since a play represents some transaction, through its regular maturation to its final event, two actions equally important must evidently constitute two plays.

As the design of tragedy is to instruct by moving the passions, it must always have a hero, a personage apparently and incontestably superior to the rest, upon whom the attention may be fixed and the anxiety suspended. For though of two persons opposing each other with equal abilities and equal virtue, the auditor will inevitably in time choose his favourite, yet as that choice must be without any cogency of conviction, the hopes or fears which it raises will be faint and languid. Of two heroes acting in confederacy against a common enemy, the virtues or dangers will give little emotion, because each claims our concern with the same right, and the heart lies at rest between equal motives.

It ought to be the first endeavour of a writer to distinguish nature from custom; or that which is

established because it is right, from that which is right only because it is established; that he may neither violate essential principles by a desire of novelty, nor debar himself from the attainment of beauties within his view, by a needless fear of breaking rules which no literary dictator had authority to enact.

No. 157. TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1751.

—Οἱ αἰδὼς
Γίγνεται, ἡ ἄνδρας μέγα σίνεται ἠδ' ὀνίνησιν.

HOMER.

Shame greatly hurts or greatly helps mankind.

ELPHINSTON.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

"THOUGH one of your correspondents has presumed to mention, with some contempt, that presence of attention and easiness of address, which the polite have long agreed to celebrate and esteem, yet I cannot be persuaded to think them unworthy of regard or cultivation; but am inclined to believe, that, as we seldom value rightly what we have never known the misery of wanting, his judgment has been vitiated by his happiness; and that a natural exuberance of assurance has hindered him from discovering its excellence and use.

"This felicity, whether bestowed by constitution or obtained by early habitudes, I can scarcely con-

template without envy. I was bred under a man of learning in the country, who inculcated nothing but the dignity of knowledge and the happiness of virtue. By frequency of admonition and confidence of assertion, he prevailed upon me to believe, that the splendor of literature would always attract reverence, if not darkened by corruption. I, therefore, pursued my studies with incessant industry, and avoided every thing which I had been taught to consider either as vicious or tending to vice, because I regarded guilt and reproach as inseparably united, and thought a tainted reputation the greatest calamity.

"At the university, I found no reason for changing my opinion; for though many among my fellow-students took the opportunity of a more remiss discipline to gratify their passions, yet virtue preserved her natural superiority, and those who ventured to neglect, were not suffered to insult her. The ambition of petty accomplishments found its way into the receptacles of learning, but was observed to seize commonly on those who either neglected the sciences or could not attain them; and I was, therefore, confirmed in the doctrines of my old master, and thought nothing worthy of my care but the means of gaining or imparting knowledge.

"This purity of manners, and intenseness of application, soon extended my renown, and I was applauded by those, whose opinion I then thought unlikely to deceive me, as a young man that gave uncommon hopes of future eminence. My performances in time reached my native province, and my relations congratulated themselves upon the new honours that were added to their family.

"I returned home covered with academical

laurels, and fraught with criticism and philosophy. The wit and the scholar excited curiosity, and my acquaintance was solicited by innumerable invitations. To please will always be the wish of benevolence, to be admired must be the constant aim of ambition; and I, therefore, considered myself as about to receive the reward of my honest labours, and to find the efficacy of learning and of virtue.

"The third day after my arrival, I dined at the house of a gentleman who had summoned a multitude of his friends to the annual celebration of his wedding day. I set forward with great exultation, and thought myself happy that I had an opportunity of displaying my knowledge to so numerous an assembly. I felt no sense of my own insufficiency, till, going up stairs to the dining-room, I heard the mingled roar of obstreperous merriment. I was, however, disgusted rather than terrified, and went forward without dejection. The whole company rose at my entrance; but when I saw so many eyes fixed at once upon me, I was blasted with a sudden imbecility; I was quelled by some nameless power which I found impossible to be resisted. My sight was dazzled, my cheeks glowed, my perceptions were confounded; I was harassed by the multitude of eager salutations, and returned the common civilities with hesitation and impropriety; the sense of my own blunders increased my confusion, and, before the exchange of ceremonies allowed me to sit down, I was ready to sink under the oppression of surprise; my voice grew weak, and my knees trembled.

"The assembly then resumed their places, and I sat with my eyes fixed upon the ground. To the questions of curiosity, or the appeals of complaisance, I could seldom answer but with negative monosyllables, or professions of ignorance; for the subjects

on which they conversed, were such as are seldom discussed in books, and were, therefore, out of my range of knowledge. At length an old clergyman, who rightly conjectured the reason of my conciseness, relieved me by some questions about the present state of natural knowledge, and engaged me, by an appearance of doubt and opposition, in the explication and defence of the Newtonian philosophy.

"The consciousness of my own abilities roused me from depression, and long familiarity with my subject enabled me to discourse with ease and volubility; but however I might please myself, I found very little added by my demonstrations to the satisfaction of the company; and my antagonist, who knew the laws of conversation too well to detain their attention long upon an unpleasing topic, after he had commended my acuteness and comprehension, dismissed the controversy, and resigned me to my former insignificance and perplexity.

"After dinner, I received from the ladies, who had heard that I was a wit, an invitation to the tea-table. I congratulated myself upon an opportunity to escape from the company, whose gayety began to be tumultuous, and among whom several hints had been dropped of the uselessness of universities, the folly of book-learning, and the awkwardness of scholars. To the ladies, therefore, I flew, as to a refuge from clamour, insult, and rusticity; but found my heart sink as I approached their apartment, and was again disconcerted by the ceremonies of entrance, and confounded by the necessity of encountering so many eyes at once.

"When I sat down, I considered that something pretty was always said to ladies, and resolved to recover my credit by some elegant observation or graceful compliment. I applied myself to the rec-

ollection of all that I had heard or read in praise of beauty, and endeavoured to accommodate some classical compliment to the present occasion. I sunk into profound meditation, revolved the characters of the heroines of old, considered whatever the poets have sung in their praise, and after having borrowed and invented, chosen and rejected a thousand sentiments, which, if I had uttered them, would not have been understood, I was awakened from my dream of learned gallantry, by the servant who distributed the tea.

"There are not many situations more incessantly uneasy than that in which the man is placed who is watching an opportunity to speak, without courage to take it when it is offered, and who, though he resolves to give a specimen of his abilities, always finds some reason or other for delaying it to the next minute. I was ashamed of silence, yet could find nothing to say of elegance or importance equal to my wishes. The ladies, afraid of my learning, thought themselves not qualified to propose any subject of prattle to a man so famous for dispute, and there was nothing on either side but impatience and vexation.

"In this conflict of shame, as I was reassembling my scattered sentiments, and, resolving to force my imagination to some sprightly sally, had just found a very happy compliment, by too much attention to my own meditations, I suffered the saucer to drop from my hand. The cup was broken, the lapdog was scalded, a brocaded petticoat was stained, and the whole assembly was thrown into disorder. I now considered all hopes of reputation as at an end, and, while they were consoling and assisting one other, stole away in silence.

"The misadventures of this unhappy day are not

yet at an end; I am afraid of meeting the meanest of them that triumphed over me in this state of stupidity and contempt, and feel the same terrors encroaching upon my heart at the sight of those who have once impressed them. Shame, above any other passion, propagates itself. Before those who have seen me confused, I can never appear without new confusion, and the remembrance of the weakness which I formerly discovered, hinders me from acting or speaking with my natural force.

"But is this misery, Mr. Rambler, never to cease? Have I spent my time in study only to become the sport of the ignorant, and debarred myself from all the common enjoyments of youth to collect ideas which must sleep in silence, and form opinions which I must not divulge? Inform me, dear Sir, by what means I may rescue my faculties from these shackles of cowardice; how I may rise to a level with my fellow-beings, recall myself from this languor of involuntary subjection to the free exertion of my intellects, and add to the power of reasoning the liberty of speech.

"I am, Sir, &c.,

"VERECUNDULUS."

No. 158. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1751.

Grammatici certant, et adhuc sub judice lis est.
HOR. ARS POET. 78.

—Critics yet contend,
And of their vain disputings find no end. FRANCIS.

Criticism, though dignified from the earliest ages by the labours of men eminent for knowledge and sagacity, and, since the revival of polite literature, the favourite study of European scholars, has not yet attained the certainty and stability of science. The rules hitherto received, are seldom drawn from any settled principle or self-evident postulate, or adapted to the natural and invariable constitution of things; but will be found, upon examination, the arbitrary edicts of legislators, authorized only by themselves, who, out of various means by which the same end may be attained, selected such as happened to occur to their own reflection, and then, by a law which idleness and timidity were too willing to obey, prohibited new experiments of wit, restrained fancy from the indulgence of her innate inclination to hazard and adventure, and condemned all future flights of genius to pursue the paths of the Mæonian eagle.

This authority may be more justly opposed, as it is apparently derived from them whom they endeavour to control; for we owe few of the rules of writing to the acuteness of critics, who have generally no other merit than that, having read the works of great

authors with attention, they have observed the arrangement of their matter, or the graces of their expression, and then expected honour and reverence for precepts which they never could have invented: so that practice has introduced rules, rather than rules have directed practice.

For this reason, the laws of every species of writing have been settled by the ideas of him who first raised it to reputation, without inquiry whether his performances were not yet susceptible of improvement. The excellences and faults of celebrated writers have been equally recommended to posterity; and so far has blind reverence prevailed, that even the number of their books has been thought worthy of imitation.

The imagination of the first authors of lyric poetry was vehement and rapid, and their knowledge various and extensive. Living in an age when science had been little cultivated, and when the minds of their auditors, not being accustomed to accurate inspection, were easily dazzled by glaring ideas, they applied themselves to instruct, rather by short sentences and striking thoughts, than by regular argumentation; and finding attention more successfully excited by sudden sallies and unexpected exclamations, than by the more artful and placid beauties of methodical deduction, they loosed their genius to its own course, passed from one sentiment to another without expressing the intermediate ideas, and roved at large over the ideal world with such lightness and agility that their footsteps are scarcely to be traced.

From this accidental peculiarity of the ancient writers, the critics deduce the rules of lyric poetry, which they have set free from all the laws by which other compositions are confined, and allow to neglect

the niceties of transition, to start into remote digressions, and to wander without restraint from one scene of imagery to another.

A writer of later times has, by the vivacity of his essays, reconciled mankind to the same licentiousness in short dissertations; and he, therefore, who wants skill to form a plan, or diligence to pursue it, needs only entitle his performance an essay, to acquire the right of heaping together the collections of half his life, without order, coherence, or propriety.

In writing, as in life, faults are endured without disgust when they are associated with transcendent merit, and may be sometimes recommended to weak judgments by the lustre which they obtain from their union with excellence; but it is the business of those who presume to superintend the taste or morals of mankind, to separate delusive combinations, and distinguish that which may be praised from that which can only be excused. As vices never promote happiness, though when overpowered by more active and more numerous virtues they cannot totally destroy it; so confusion and irregularity produce no beauty, though they cannot always obstruct the brightness of genius and learning. To proceed from one truth to another, and connect distant propositions by regular consequences, is the great prerogative of man. Independent and unconnected sentiments flashing upon the mind in quick succession, may, for a time, delight by their novelty, but they differ from systematical reasoning, as single notes from harmony, as glances of lightning from the radiance of the sun.

When rules are thus drawn, rather from precedents than reason, there is danger not only from the faults of an author, but from the errors of those who

criticize his works; since they may often mislead their pupils by false representations, as the Ciceronians of the sixteenth century were betrayed into barbarisms by corrupt copies of their darling writer.

It is established at present, that the proemial lines of a poem, in which the general subject is proposed, must be void of glitter and embellishment. 'The first lines of Paradise Lost,' says Addison, 'are perhaps as plain, simple, and unadorned, as any of the whole poem; in which particular the author has conformed himself to the example of Homer, and the precept of Horace.'

This observation seems to have been made by an implicit adoption of the common opinion, without consideration either of the precept or example. Had Horace been consulted, he would have been found to direct only what should be comprised in the proposition, not how it should be expressed, and to have commended Homer in opposition to a meaner poet, not for the gradual elevation of his diction, but the judicious expansion of his plan; for displaying unpromised events, not for producing unexpected elegances.

> —*Speciosa dehinc miracula promat;*
> *Antiphaten Scyllamque, et cum Cyclope Charybdim.*
> ARS POET. 144.

> But from a cloud of smoke he breaks to light,
> And pours his specious miracles to sight;
> Antiphates his hideous feast devours,
> Charybdis barks, and Polyphemus roars. FRANCIS.

If the exordial verses of Homer be compared with the rest of the poem, they will not appear remarkable for plainness or simplicity, but rather eminently adorned and illuminated.

> Ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε Μοῦσα πολύτροπον, ὃς μάλα πολλὰ
> Πλάγχθη, ἐπεὶ Τροίης ἱερὸν πτολίεθρον ἔπερσε·

Πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα, καὶ νόον ἔγνω.
Πολλὰ δ' ὅγ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμὸν,
Ἀρνύμενος ἥν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἑταίρων·
Ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὣς ἑτάρους ἐρρύσατο ἱέμενός περ·
Αὐτῶν γὰρ σφετέρῃσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὄλοντο,
Νήπιοι, οἱ κατὰ βοῦς ὑπερίονος ἠελίοιο
Ἤσθιον· αὐτὰρ ὁ τοῖσιν ἀφείλετο νόστιμον ἦμαρ,
Τῶν ἀμόθεν γε, θέα, θύγατερ Διὸς, εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν.

The man for wisdom's various arts renown'd,
Long exercised in woes, O muse! resound.
Who, when his arms had wrought the destined fall
Of sacred Troy, and razed her heaven-built wall,
Wandering from clime to clime, observant stray'd,
Their manners noted, and their states survey'd.
On stormy seas unnumber'd toils he bore,
Safe with his friends to gain his natal shore:
Vain toils! their impious folly dared to prey
On herds devoted to the god of day:
The god, vindictive doom'd them never more,
Ah, men unbless'd! to touch that natal shore.
O snatch some portion of these acts from fate,
Celestial muse! and to our world relate. POPE.

The first verses of the Iliad are, in like manner, particularly splendid, and the proposition of the Æneid closes with dignity and magnificence not often to be found even in the poetry of Virgil.

The intent of the introduction is to raise expectation, and suspend it; something therefore must be discovered, and something concealed; and the poet, while the fertility of his invention is yet unknown, may properly recommend himself by the grace of his language.

He that reveals too much, or promises too little; he that never irritates the intellectual appetite, or that immediately satiates it; equally defeats his own purpose. It is necessary to the pleasure of the reader, that the events should not be anticipated, and how, then, can his attention be invited but by grandeur of expression?

No. 159. TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1751.

Sunt verba et voces, quibus hunc lenire dolorem
Possis, et magnam morbi deponere partem.

HOR. EPIST. i. 1. 34.

The power of words, and soothing sounds, appease
The raging pain, and lessen the disease. FRANCIS.

THE imbecility with which Verecundulus complains that the presence of a numerous assembly freezes his faculties, is particularly incident to the studious part of mankind, whose education necessarily secludes them in their earlier years from mingled converse, till at their dismission from schools and academies they plunge at once into the tumult of the world, and, coming forth from the gloom of solitude, are overpowered by the blaze of public life.

It is, perhaps, kindly provided by nature, that, as the feathers and strength of a bird grow together, and her wings are not completed till she is able to fly, so some proportion should be preserved in the human kind between judgment and courage; the precipitation of inexperience is therefore restrained by shame, and we remain shackled by timidity, till we have learned to speak and act with propriety.

I believe few can review the days of their youth, without recollecting temptations, which shame, rather than virtue, enabled them to resist; and opinions which, however erroneous in their principles and dangerous in their consequences, they have panted

to advance at the hazard of contempt and hatred, when they found themselves irresistibly depressed by a languid anxiety, which seized them at the moment of utterance, and still gathered strength from their endeavours to resist it.

It generally happens that assurance keeps an even pace with ability; and the fear of miscarriage, which hinders our first attempts, is gradually dissipated as our skill advances towards certainty of success. That bashfulness, therefore, which prevents disgrace, that short and temporary shame, which secures us from the danger of lasting reproach, cannot be properly counted among our misfortunes.

Bashfulness, however it may incommode for a moment, scarcely ever produces evils of long continuance; it may flush the cheek, flutter the heart, deject the eyes, and enchain the tongue, but its mischiefs soon pass off without remembrance. It may sometimes exclude pleasure, but seldom opens any avenue to sorrow or remorse. It is observed somewhere, that 'few have repented of having forborne to speak.'

To excite opposition, and inflame malevolence, is the unhappy privilege of courage made arrogant by consciousness of strength. No man finds in himself any inclination to attack or oppose him who confesses his superiority by blushing in his presence. Qualities exerted with apparent fearfulness receive applause from every voice, and support from every hand. Diffidence may check resolution and obstruct performance, but compensates its embarrassments by more important advantages; it conciliates the proud, and softens the severe, averts envy from excellence, and censure from miscarriage.

It may, indeed, happen that knowledge and virtue remain too long congealed by this frigorific power,

as the principles of vegetation are sometimes obstructed by lingering frosts. He that enters late into a public station, though with all the abilities requisite to the discharge of his duty, will find his powers at first impeded by a timidity which he himself knows to be vicious, and must struggle long against dejection and reluctance, before he obtains the full command of his own attention, and adds the gracefulness of ease to the dignity of merit.

For this disease of the mind, I know not whether any remedies of much efficacy can be found. To advise a man unaccustomed to the eyes of multitudes to mount a tribunal without perturbation; to tell him whose life has passed in the shades of contemplation, that he must not be disconcerted or perplexed in receiving and returning the compliments of a splendid assembly; is to advise an inhabitant of Brazil or Sumatra not to shiver at an English winter, or him who has always lived upon a plain to look from a precipice without emotion. It is to suppose custom instantaneously controllable by reason, and to endeavour to communicate by precepts that which only time and habit can bestow.

He that hopes by philosophy and contemplation alone to fortify himself against that awe which all, at their first appearance on the stage of life, must feel from The Spectators, will, at the hour of need, be mocked by his resolution; and I doubt whether the preservatives which Plato relates Alcibiades to have received from Socrates, when he was about to speak in public, proved sufficient to secure him from the powerful fascination.

Yet, as the effects of time may by art and industry be accelerated or retarded, it cannot be improper to consider how this troublesome instinct may be opposed when it exceeds its just proportion, and, in-

stead of repressing petulance and temerity, silences eloquence and debilitates force; since, though it cannot be hoped that anxiety should be immediately dissipated, it may be at least somewhat abated: and the passions will operate with less violence, when reason rises against them, than while she either slumbers in neutrality, or, mistaking her interest, lends them her assistance.

No cause more frequently produces bashfulness than too high an opinion of our own importance. He that imagines an assembly filled with his merit, panting with expectation, and hushed with attention, easily terrifies himself with the dread of disappointing them, and strains his imagination in pursuit of something that may vindicate the veracity of fame, and show that his reputation was not gained by chance. He considers, that what he shall say or do will never be forgotten; that renown or infamy are suspended upon every syllable, and that nothing ought to fall from him which will not bear the test of time. Under such solicitude, who can wonder that the mind is overwhelmed, and, by struggling with attempts above her strength, quickly sinks into languishment and despondency?

The most useful medicines are often unpleasing to the taste. Those who are oppressed by their own reputation, will, perhaps, not be comforted by hearing that their cares are unnecessary. But the truth is, that no man is much regarded by the rest of the world. He that considers how little he dwells upon the condition of others, will learn how little the attention of others is attracted by himself. While we see multitudes passing before us, of whom perhaps not one appears to deserve our notice or excite our sympathy, we should remember, that we likewise are lost in the same throng; that the eye

which happens to glance upon us is turned in a moment on him that follows us, and that the utmost which we can reasonably hope or fear, is to fill a vacant hour with prattle, and be forgotten.

No. 160. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 1751.

—Inter se convenit ursis. JUV. SAT. XV. 164.

Beasts of each kind their fellows spare;
Bear lives in amity with bear.

'THE world,' says Locke, 'has people of all sorts.' As in the general hurry produced by the superfluities of some, and necessities of others, no man needs to stand still for want of employment; so in the innumerable gradations of ability, and endless varieties of study and inclination, no employment can be vacant for want of a man qualified to discharge it.

Such is probably the natural state of the universe, but it is so much deformed by interest and passion, that the benefit of this adaptation of men to things is not always perceived. The folly or indigence of those who set their services to sale, inclines them to boast of qualifications which they do not possess, and attempt business which they do not understand; and they who have the power of assigning to others the task of life, are seldom honest or seldom happy in their nominations. Patrons are corrupted by avarice, cheated by credulity, or over-

powered by resistless solicitation. They are sometimes too strongly influenced by honest prejudices of friendship, or the prevalence of virtuous compassion. For, whatever cool reason may direct, it is not easy for a man of tender and scrupulous goodness to overlook the immediate effect of his own actions, by turning his eyes upon remoter consequences, and to do that which must give present pain, for the sake of obviating evil yet unfelt, or securing advantage in time to come. What is distant is in itself obscure, and, when we have no wish to see it, easily escapes our notice, or takes such a form as desire or imagination bestows upon it.

Every man might, for the same reason, in the multitudes that swarm about him, find some kindred mind with which he could unite in confidence and friendship; yet we see many straggling single about the world, unhappy for want of an associate, and pining with the necessity of confining their sentiments to their own bosoms.

This inconvenience arises, in like manner, from struggles of the will against the understanding. It is not often difficult to find a suitable companion, if every man would be content with such as he is qualified to please. But if vanity tempts him to forsake his rank, and post himself among those with whom no common interest or mutual pleasure can ever unite him, he must always live in a state of unsocial separation, without tenderness and without trust.

There are many natures which can never approach within a certain distance, and which, when any irregular motive impels them towards contact, seem to start back from each other by some invincible repulsion. There are others which immediately cohere whenever they come into the reach

of mutual attraction, and, with very little formality of preparation, mingle intimately as soon as they meet. Every man, whom either business or curiosity has thrown at large into the world, will recollect many instances of fondness and dislike, which have forced themselves upon him without the intervention of his judgment; of dispositions to court some and avoid others, when he could assign no reason for the preference, or none adequate to the violence of his passions; of influence that acted instantaneously upon his mind, and which no arguments or persuasions could ever overcome.

Among those with whom time and intercourse have made us familiar, we feel our affections divided in different proportions without much regard to moral or intellectual merit. Every man knows some whom he cannot induce himself to trust, though he has no reason to suspect that they would betray him; those to whom he cannot complain, though he never observed them to want compassion; those in whose presence he never can be gay, though excited by invitations to mirth and freedom; and those from whom he cannot be content to receive instruction, though they never insulted his ignorance by contempt or ostentation.

That much regard is to be had to those instincts of kindness and dislike, or that reason should blindly follow them, I am far from intending to inculcate. It is very certain that by indulgence we may give them strength which they have not from nature, and almost every example of ingratitude and treachery proves, that by obeying them we may commit our happiness to those who are very unworthy of so great a trust. But it may deserve to be remarked, that since few contend much with their inclinations, it is generally vain to solicit the good-will of those

whom we perceive thus involuntarily alienated from us; neither knowledge nor virtue will reconcile antipathy; and though officiousness may for a time be admitted, and diligence applauded, they will at last be dismissed with coldness or discouraged by neglect.

Some have, indeed, an occult power of stealing upon the affections, of exciting universal benevolence, and disposing every heart to fondness and friendship. But this is a felicity granted only to the favourites of nature. The greater part of mankind find a different reception from different dispositions; they sometimes obtain unexpected caresses from those whom they never flattered with uncommon regard, and sometimes exhaust all their arts of pleasing without effect. To these it is necessary to look round, and attempt every breast in which they find virtue sufficient for the foundation of friendship; to enter into the crowd, and try whom chance will offer to their notice, till they fix on some temper congenial to their own, as the magnet rolled in the dust collects the fragments of its kindred metal from a thousand particles of other substances.

Every man must have remarked the facility with which the kindness of others is sometimes gained by those to whom he never could have imparted his own. We are by our occupations, education, and habits of life, divided almost into different species, which regard one another for the most part with scorn and malignity. Each of these classes of the human race has desires, fears, and conversation, vexations, and merriment, peculiar to itself; cares which another cannot feel; pleasures which he cannot partake; and modes of expressing every sensation, which he cannot understand. That frolic which shakes one man with laughter will convulse another

with indignation; the strain of jocularity which in one place obtains treats and patronage, would in another be heard with indifference, and in a third with abhorrence.

To raise esteem we must benefit others, to procure love we must please them. Aristotle observes that old men do not readily form friendships, because they are not easily susceptible of pleasure. He that can contribute to the hilarity of the vacant hour, or partake with equal gust the favourite amusement, he whose mind is employed on the same objects, and who therefore never harasses the understanding with unaccustomed ideas, will be welcomed with ardour, and left with regret, unless he destroys those recommendations by faults with which peace and security cannot consist.

It were happy if, in forming friendships, virtue could concur with pleasure; but the greatest part of human gratifications approach so nearly to vice, that few who make the delight of others their rule of conduct, can avoid disingenuous compliances; yet certainly he that suffers himself to be driven or allured from virtue, mistakes his own interest, since he gains succour by means, for which his friend, if ever he becomes wise, must scorn him, and for which at last he must scorn himself.

No. 161. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1751.

Οἵηπερ φύλλων γενεὴ, τοιήδε καὶ Ἀνδρῶν.
HOM. IL. Z. 146.

Frail as the leaves that quiver on the sprays,
Like them man flourishes, like them decays.

"MR. RAMBLER,

"SIR,

"YOU have formerly observed that curiosity often terminates in barren knowledge, and that the mind is prompted to study and inquiry rather by the uneasiness of ignorance, than the hope of profit. Nothing can be of less importance to any present interest than the fortune of those who have been long lost in the grave, and from whom nothing now can be hoped or feared. Yet to rouse the zeal of a true antiquary, little more is necessary than to mention a name which mankind have conspired to forget; he will make his way to remote scenes of action through obscurity and contradiction, as Tully sought, amidst bushes and brambles, the tomb of Archimedes.

"It is not easy to discover how it concerns him that gathers the produce, or receives the rent of an estate, to know through what families the land has passed, who is registered in the Conqueror's survey as its possessor, how often it has been forfeited by treason, or how often sold by prodigality. The power or wealth of the present inhabitants of a country cannot be much increased by an inquiry after the

names of those barbarians, who destroyed one another twenty centuries ago, in contests for the shelter of woods or convenience of pasturage. Yet we see that no man can be at rest in the enjoyment of a new purchase till he has learned the history of his grounds from the ancient inhabitants of the parish, and that no nation omits to record the actions of their ancestors, however bloody, savage, and rapacious.

"The same disposition, as different opportunities call it forth, discovers itself in great or little things. I have always thought it unworthy of a wise man to slumber in total inactivity, only because he happens to have no employment equal to his ambition or genius; it is therefore my custom to apply my attention to the objects before me, and as I cannot think any place wholly unworthy of notice that affords a habitation to a man of letters, I have collected the history and antiquities of the several garrets in which I have resided.

Quantulacunque estis, vos ego magna voco.

How small to others, but how great to me!

"Many of these narratives my industry has been able to extend to a considerable length; but the woman with whom I now lodge has lived only eighteen months in the house, and can give no account of its ancient revolutions; the plasterer having, at her entrance, obliterated, by his whitewash, all the smoky memorials which former tenants had left upon the ceiling, and perhaps drawn the veil of oblivion over politicians, philosophers, and poets.

"When I first cheapened my lodgings, the landlady told me, that she hoped I was not an author, for the lodgers on the first floor had stipulated that

the upper rooms should not be occupied by a noisy trade. I very readily promised to give no disturbance to her family, and soon dispatched a bargain on the usual terms.

"I had not slept many nights in my new apartment before I began to inquire after my predecessors, and found my landlady, whose imagination is filled chiefly with her own affairs, very ready to give me information.

"Curiosity, like all other desires, produces pain as well as pleasure. Before she began her narrative, I had heated my head with expectations of adventures and discoveries, of elegance in disguise, and learning in distress; and was somewhat mortified when I heard that the first tenant was a tailor, of whom nothing was remembered but that he complained of his room for want of light; and, after having lodged in it a month, and paid only a week's rent, pawned a piece of cloth which he was trusted to cut out, and was forced to make a precipitate retreat from this quarter of the town.

"The next was a young woman newly arrived from the country, who lived for five weeks with great regularity, and became, by frequent treats, very much the favourite of the family, but at last received visits so frequently from a cousin in Cheapside, that she brought the reputation of the house into danger, and was therefore dismissed, with good advice.

"The room then stood empty for a fortnight; my landlady began to think that she had judged hardly, and often wished for such another lodger. At last an elderly man of grave aspect read the bill, and bargained for the room at the very first price that was asked. He lived in close retirement, seldom went out till evening, and then returned early,

sometimes cheerful, and at other times dejected. It was remarkable, that whatever he purchased, he never had small money in his pocket, and though cool and temperate on other occasions, was always vehement and stormy till he received his change. He paid his rent with great exactness, and seldom failed once a week to requite my landlady's civility with a supper. At last, such is the fate of human felicity, the house was alarmed at midnight by the constable, who demanded to search the garrets. My landlady assuring him that he had mistaken the door, conducted him up stairs, where he found the tools of a coiner; but the tenant had crawled along the roof to an empty house, and escaped; much to the joy of my landlady, who declares him a very honest man, and wonders why anybody should be hanged for making money, when such numbers are in want of it. She however confesses that she shall, for the future, always question the character of those who take her garret without beating down the price.

"The bill was then placed again in the window, and the poor woman was teased for seven weeks by innumerable passengers, who obliged her to climb with them every hour up five stories, and then disliked the prospect, hated the noise of a public street, thought the stairs narrow, objected to a low ceiling, required the walls to be hung with fresher paper, asked questions about the neighbourhood, could not think of living so far from their acquaintance, wished the windows had looked to the south rather than the west, told how the door and chimney might have been better disposed, bid her half the price that she asked, or promised to give her earnest the next day, and came no more.

"At last, a short meagre man, in a tarnished waist-

coat, desired to see the garret, and when he had stipulated for two long shelves, and a larger table, hired it at a low rate. When the affair was completed, he looked round him with great satisfaction, and repeated some words which the woman did not understand. In two days he brought a great box of books, took possession of his room, and lived very inoffensively, except that he frequently disturbed the inhabitants of the next floor by unseasonable noises. He was generally in bed at noon, but, from evening to midnight, he sometimes talked aloud with great vehemence, sometimes stamped as in a rage, sometimes threw down his poker, then clattered his chairs, then sat down in deep thought, and again burst out into loud vociferations; sometimes he would sigh as oppressed with misery, and sometimes shake with convulsive laughter. When he encountered any of the family, he gave way or bowed, but rarely spoke, except that, as he went up stairs, he often repeated,

—Ὃς ὑπερτατα ἁματα ναίει,

This habitant th' aerial regions boast.

Hard words, to which his neighbours listened so often, that they learned them without understanding them. What was his employment she did not venture to ask him, but at last heard a printer's boy inquire for the author.

"My landlady was very often advised to beware of this strange man, who, though he was quiet for the present, might, perhaps, become outrageous in the hot months; but as she was punctually paid, she could not find any sufficient reason for dismissing him, till one night he convinced her, by setting fire

to his curtains, that it was not safe to have an author for her inmate.

"She had then, for six weeks, a succession of tenants, who left her house on Saturday, and, instead of paying their rent, stormed at their landlady. At last she took in two sisters, one of whom had spent her little fortune in procuring remedies for a lingering disease, and was now supported and attended by the other; she climbed with difficulty to the apartment, where she languished eight weeks without impatience or lamentation, except for the expense and fatigue which her sister suffered, and then calmly and contentedly expired. The sister followed her to the grave, paid the few debts which they had contracted, wiped away the tears of useless sorrow, and, returning to the business of common life, resigned to me the vacant habitation.

"Such, Mr. Rambler, are the changes which have happened in the narrow space where my present fortune has fixed my residence. So true it is that amusement and instruction are always at hand for those who have skill and willingness to find them; and so just is the observation of Juvenal, that a single house will show whatever is done or suffered in the world.

"I am, Sir," &c.

No. 162. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1751.

Orbus es, et locuples, et Bruto consule natus,
Esse tibi veras credis amicitias?
Sunt vere; sed quas juvenis, quas pauper habebas,
Qui novus est, mortem diligit ille tuam.

MART. EPIG. xi. 45.

What! old, and rich, and childless too,
And yet believe your friends are true?
Truth might perhaps to those belong,
To those who lov'd you poor and young;
But, trust me, for the new you have,
They 'll love you dearly—in your grave. F. LEWIS.

One of the complaints uttered by Milton's Samson, in the anguish of blindness, is, that he shall pass his life under the direction of others; that he cannot regulate his conduct by his own knowledge, but must lie at the mercy of those who undertake to guide him.

There is no state more contrary to the dignity of wisdom than perpetual and unlimited dependence, in which the understanding lies useless, and every motion is received from external impulse. Reason is the great distinction of human nature, the faculty by which we approach to some degree of association with celestial intelligences; but as the excellence of every power appears only in its operations, not to have reason, and to have it useless and unemployed, is nearly the same.

Such is the weakness of man, that the essence of things is seldom so much regarded as external and accidental appendages. A small variation of trifling

circumstances, a slight change of form by an artificial dress, or a casual difference of appearance, by a new light and situation, will conciliate affection or excite abhorrence, and determine us to pursue or to avoid. Every man considers a necessity of compliance with any will but his own, as the lowest state of ignominy and meanness; few are so far lost in cowardice and negligence, as not to rouse at the first insult of tyranny, and exert all their force against him who usurps their property, or invades any privilege of speech or action. Yet we often see those who never wanted spirit to repel encroachment or oppose violence, at last, by a gradual relaxation of vigilance, delivering up, without capitulation, the fortress, which they defended against assault, and laying down unbidden the weapons which they grasped the harder for every attempt to wrest them, from their hands. Men eminent for spirit and wisdom often resign themselves to voluntary pupillage, and suffer their lives to be modelled by officious ignorance, and their choice to be regulated by presumptuous stupidity.

This unresisting acquiescence in the determination of others, may be the consequence of application to some study remote from the beaten track of life; some employment which does not allow leisure for sufficient inspection of those petty affairs, by which nature has decreed a great part of our duration to be filled. To a mind thus withdrawn from common objects, it is more eligible to repose on the prudence of another, than to be exposed every moment to slight interruptions. The submission which such confidence requires, is paid without pain, because it implies no confession of inferiority. The business from which we withdraw our cognizance, is not above our abilities, but below our notice. We please

our pride with the effects of our influence thus weakly exerted, and fancy ourselves placed in a higher orb, from which we regulate subordinate agents by a slight and distant superintendence. But whatever vanity or abstraction may suggest, no man can safely do that by others which might be done by himself; he that indulges negligence will quickly become ignorant of his own affairs; and he that trusts without reserve will at last be deceived.

It is, however, impossible but that, as the attention tends strongly towards one thing, it must retire from another; and he that omits the care of domestic business, because he is engrossed by inquiries of more importance to mankind, has at least the merit of suffering in a good cause. But, there are many who can plead no such extenuation of their folly; who shake off the burden of their station, not that they may soar with less incumbrance to the heights of knowledge or virtue, but that they may loiter at ease and sleep in quiet; and who select for friendship and confidence, not the faithful and the virtuous, but the soft, the civil, and compliant.

This openness to flattery is the common disgrace of declining life. When men feel weakness increasing on them, they naturally desire to rest from the struggles of contradiction, the fatigue of reasoning, and the anxiety of circumspection; when they are hourly tormented with pains and diseases, they are unable to bear any new disturbance, and consider all opposition as an addition to misery, of which they feel already more than they can patiently endure. Thus desirous of peace, and thus fearful of pain, the old man seldom inquires after any other qualities in those whom he caresses, than quickness in conjecturing his desires, activity in supplying his

wants, dexterity in intercepting complaints before they approach near enough to disturb him, flexibility to his present humour, submission to hasty petulance, and attention to wearisome narrations. By these arts alone many have been able to defeat the claims of kindred and of merit, and to enrich themselves with presents and legacies.

Thrasybulus inherited a large fortune, and augmented it by the revenues of several lucrative employments, which he discharged with honour and dexterity. He was at last wise enough to consider, that life should not be devoted wholly to accumulation, and, therefore, retiring to his estate, applied himself to the education of his children, and the cultivation of domestic happiness.

He passed several years in this pleasing amusement, and saw his care amply recompensed; his daughters were celebrated for modesty and elegance, and his sons for learning, prudence, and spirit. In time, the eagerness with which the neighbouring gentlemen courted his alliance, obliged him to resign his daughters to other families; the vivacity and curiosity of his sons hurried them out of rural privacy into the open world, from whence they had not soon an inclination to return. This, however, he had always hoped; he pleased himself with the success of his schemes, and felt no inconvenience from solitude till an apoplexy deprived him of his wife.

Thrasybulus had now no companion; and the maladies of increasing years having taken from him much of the power of procuring amusement for himself, he thought it necessary to procure some inferior friend who might ease him of his economical solicitudes, and divert him by cheerful conversation. All these qualities he soon recollected in Vafer, a clerk

in one of the offices over which he had formerly presided. Vafer was invited to visit his old patron, and being by his station acquainted with the present modes of life, and by constant practice dexterous in business, entertained him with so many novelties, and so readily disentangled his affairs, that he was desired to resign his clerkship, and accept a liberal salary in the house of Thrasybulus.

Vafer, having always lived in a state of dependence, was well versed in the arts by which favour is obtained, and could without repugnance or hesitation accommodate himself to every caprice, and echo every opinion. He never doubted but to be convinced, nor attempted opposition but to flatter Thrasybulus with the pleasure of a victory. By this practice, he found his way into his patron's heart, and having first made himself agreeable, soon became important. His insidious diligence, by which the laziness of age was gratified, engrossed the management of affairs; and his petty offices of civility, and occasional intercessions, persuaded the tenants to consider him as their friend and benefactor, and to entreat his enforcement of their representations of hard years, and his countenance to petitions for abatement of rent.

Thrasybulus had now banqueted on flattery, till he could no longer bear the harshness of remonstrance or the insipidity of truth. All contrariety to his own opinion shocked him like a violation of some natural right, and all recommendation of his affairs to his own inspection was dreaded by him as a summons to torture. His children were alarmed by the sudden riches of Vafer, but their complaints were heard by their father with impatience, as the result of a conspiracy against his quiet, and a design to condemn him, for their own advantage, to groan out

his last hours in perplexity and drudgery. The daughters retired with tears in their eyes, but the son continued his importunities till he found his inheritance hazarded by his obstinacy. Vafer triumphed over all their efforts, and continuing to confirm himself in authority, at the death of his master, purchased an estate, and bade defiance to inquiry and justice.

No. 163. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1751.

Mitte superba pati fastidia, spemque caducam
Despice; vive tibi, nam moriere tibi. SENECA.

Bow to no patron's insolence, rely
On no frail hopes, in freedom live and die. F. LEWIS.

NONE of the cruelties exercised by wealth and power upon indigence and dependence is more mischievous in its consequences, or more frequently practised with wanton negligence, than the encouragement of expectations which are never to be gratified, and the elation and depression of the heart by needless vicissitude of hope and disappointment.

Every man is rich or poor, according to the proportion between his desires and enjoyments; any enlargement of wishes is therefore equally destructive to happiness with the diminution of possession, and he that teaches another to long for what he never shall obtain, is no less an enemy to his quiet,

than if he had robbed him of part of his patrimony.

But representations thus refined exhibit no adequate idea of the guilt of pretended friendship; of artifices by which followers are attracted only to decorate the retinue of pomp, and swell the shout of popularity, and to be dismissed with contempt and ignominy, when their leader has succeeded or miscarried, when he is sick of show, and weary of noise. While a man, infatuated with the promises of greatness, wastes his hours and days in attendance and solicitation, the honest opportunities of improving his condition pass by without his notice, he neglects to cultivate his own barren soil, because he expects every moment to be placed in regions of spontaneous fertility, and is seldom roused from his delusion, but by the gripe of distress which he cannot resist, and the sense of evils which cannot be remedied.

The punishment of Tantalus in the infernal regions affords a just image of hungry servility, flattered with the approach of advantage, doomed to lose it before it comes into his reach, always within a few days of felicity, and always sinking back to his former wants.

Καὶ μὴν Τάνταλον εἰσεῖδον χαλεπ' ἄλγε' ἔχοντα,
Ἑσταότ' ἐν λίμνῃ, ἡ δὲ, προσέπλαζε γενείῳ·
Στεῦτο δὲ διψάων, πιέειν δ' οὐκ εἶχεν ἐλέσθαι.
Ὁσσάκι γὰρ κύψει ὁ γέρων πιέειν μενεαίνων,
Τοσσάχ' ὕδωρ ἀπολέσκετ' ἀναβροχθέν· ἀμφὶ δὲ ποσσὶ
Γαῖα μέλαινα φάνεσκε· καταζῆνασκε δὲ δαίμων.
Δένδρεα δ' ὑψιπέτηλα καταχρῆθεν χέε καρπων·
Ὄχνὰι, καὶ ροιαὶ, καὶ μηλέαι ἀγλαόκαρποι,
Συκαί τε γλυκεραὶ, καὶ ἐλαῖαι τηλεθόωσαι.
Τῶν ὁπότ' ἰθύσει ὁ γέρων ἐπὶ χερσὶ μάσασθαι
Τὰς δ' ἄνεμος ῥίπτασκε ποτι νεφεα σκιόεντα.

ODYSS. Λ. 584.

'I saw,' says Homer's Ulysses, 'the severe punishment of Tantalus. In a lake, whose waters approached to his lips, he stood burning with thirst, without the power to drink. Whenever he inclined his head to the stream, some deity commanded it to be dry, and the dark earth appeared at his feet. Around him lofty trees spread their fruits to view; the pear, the pomegranate, and the apple, the green olive, and the luscious fig, quivered before him, which, whenever he extended his hand to seize them, were snatched by the winds into clouds and obscurity.'

This image of misery was perhaps originally suggested to some poet by the conduct of his patron, by the daily contemplation of splendour which he never must partake, by fruitless attempts to catch at interdicted happiness, and by the sudden evanescence of his reward, when he thought his labours almost at an end. To groan with poverty, when all about him was opulence, riot, and superfluity, and to find the favours which he had long been encouraged to hope, and had long endeavoured to deserve, squandered at last on nameless ignorance, was to thirst with water flowing before him, and to see the fruits to which his hunger was hastening, scattered by the wind. Nor can my correspondent, whatever he may have suffered, express with more justness or force the vexations of dependence.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

"I am one of those mortals who have been courted and envied as the favourites of the great. Having often gained the prize of composition at the university, I began to hope that I should obtain the same distinction in every other place, and deter-

mined to forsake the profession to which I was destined by my parents, and in which the interest of my family would have procured me a very advantageous settlement. The pride of wit fluttered in my heart, and when I prepared to leave the college, nothing entered my imagination but honours, caresses, and rewards, riches without labour, and luxury without expense.

"I however delayed my departure for a time, to finish the performance by which I was to draw the first notice of mankind upon me. When it was completed I hurried to London, and considered every moment that passed before its publication, as lost in a kind of neutral existence, and cut off from the golden hours of happiness and fame. The piece was at last printed, and disseminated by a rapid sale; I wandered from one place of concourse to another, feasted from morning to night on the repetition of my own praises, and enjoyed the various conjectures of critics, the mistaken candour of my friends, and the impotent malice of my enemies. Some had read the manuscript, and rectified its inaccuracies; others had seen it in a state so imperfect, that they could not forbear to wonder at its present excellence; some had conversed with the author at the coffee-house; and others gave hints that they had lent him money.

"I knew that no performance is so favourably read as that of a writer who suppresses his name, and therefore resolved to remain concealed, till those by whom literary reputation is established had given their suffrages too publicly to retract them. At length my bookseller informed me that Aurantius, the standing patron of merit, had sent inquiries after me, and invited me to his acquaintance.

"The time which I had long expected was now arrived. I went to Aurantius with a beating heart, for I looked upon our interview as the critical moment of my destiny. I was received with civilities, which my academic rudeness made me unable to repay; but when I had recovered from my confusion, I prosecuted the conversation with such liveliness and propriety, that I confirmed my new friend in his esteem of my abilities, and was dismissed with the utmost ardour of profession and raptures of fondness.

"I was soon summoned to dine with Aurantius, who had assembled the most judicious of his friends to partake of the entertainment. Again I exerted my powers of sentiment and expression, and again found every eye sparkling with delight, and every tongue silent with attention. I now became familiar at the table of Aurantius, but could never, in his most private or jocund hours, obtain more from him than general declarations of esteem, or endearments of tenderness, which included no particular promise, and therefore conferred no claim. This frigid reserve somewhat disgusted me, and when he complained of three days' absence, I took care to inform him with how much importunity of kindness I had been detained by his rival Pollio.

"Aurantius now considered his honour as endangered by the desertion of a wit, and lest I should have an inclination to wander, told me that I could never find a friend more constant or zealous than himself; that indeed he had made no promises, because he hoped to surprise me with advancement, but had been silently promoting my interest, and should continue his good offices, unless he found the kindness of others more desired.

"If you, Mr. Rambler, have ever ventured your

philosophy within the attraction of greatness, you know the force of such language introduced with a smile of gracious tenderness, and impressed at the conclusion with an air of solemn sincerity. From that instant I gave myself up wholly to Aurantius, and as he immediately resumed his former gayety, expected every moment a summons to some employment of dignity and profit. One month succeeded another, and, in defiance of appearances, I still fancied myself nearer to my wishes, and continued to dream of success, and wake to disappointment. At last, the failure of my little fortune compelled me to abate the finery which I hitherto thought necessary to the company with whom I associated, and the rank to which I should be raised. Aurantius, from the moment in which he discovered my poverty, considered me as fully in his power, and afterwards rather permitted my attendance than invited it; thought himself at liberty to refuse my visits, whenever he had other amusements within reach; and often suffered me to wait, without pretending any necessary business. When I was admitted to his table, if any man of rank equal to his own was present, he took occasion to mention my writings, and commend my ingenuity, by which he intended to apologize for the confusion of distinctions, and the improper assortment of his company; and often called upon me to entertain his friends with my productions, as a sportsman delights the squires of his neighbourhood with the curvets of his horse, or the obedience of his spaniels.

"To complete my mortification, it was his practice to impose tasks upon me, by requiring me to write upon such subjects as he thought susceptible of ornament and illustration. With these extorted performances he was little satisfied, because he

rarely found in them the ideas which his own imagination had suggested, and which he therefore thought more natural than mine.

"When the pale of ceremony is broken, rudeness and insult soon enter the breach. He now found that he might safely harass me with vexation; that he had fixed the shackles of patronage upon me, and that I could neither resist him nor escape. At last, in the eighth year of my servitude, when the clamour of creditors was vehement, and my necessity known to be extreme, he offered me a small office, but hinted his expectation that I should marry a young woman with whom he had been acquainted.

"I was not so far depressed by my calamities as to comply with his proposal; but knowing that complaints and expostulations would but gratify his insolence, I turned away with that contempt with which I shall never want spirit to treat the wretch who can outgo the guilt of a robber without the temptation of his profit, and who lures the credulous and thoughtless to maintain the show of his levee, and the mirth of his table, at the expense of honour, happiness, and life.

"I am, Sir, &c.,

"LIBERALIS."

No. 164. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1751.

> — *Vitium, Gaure, Catonis habes.*
>
> MART. EPIG. ii. 89. 2.

Gaurus pretends to Cato's fame;
And proves——by Cato's vice, his claim.

DISTINCTION is so pleasing to the pride of man, that a great part of the pain and pleasure of life arises from the gratification or disappointment of an incessant wish for superiority, from the success or miscarriage of secret competitions, from victories and defeats, of which, though they appear to us of great importance, in reality none are conscious except ourselves.

Proportionate to the prevalence of this love of praise is the variety of means by which its attainment is attempted. Every man, however hopeless his pretensions may appear to all but himself, has some project by which he hopes to rise to reputation; some art by which he imagines that the notice of the world will be attracted; some quality, good or bad, which discriminates him from the common herd of mortals, and by which others may be persuaded to love, or compelled to fear him. The ascents of honour, however steep, never appear inaccessible; he that despairs to scale the precipices by which valour and learning have conducted their favourites, discovers some by-path, or easier acclivity, which, though it cannot bring him to the summit, will yet enable him to overlook those with whom he is now

contending for eminence; and we seldom require more to the happiness of the present hour, than to surpass him that stands next before us.

As the greater part of human kind speak and act wholly by imitation, most of those who aspire to honour and applause propose to themselves some example which serves as the model of their conduct and the limit of their hopes. Almost every man, if closely examined, will be found to have enlisted himself under some leader whom he expects to conduct him to renown; to have some hero or other, living or dead, in his view, whose character he endeavours to assume, and whose performances he labours to equal.

When the original is well chosen and judiciously copied, the imitator often arrives at excellence which he could never have attained without direction; for few are formed with abilities to discover new possibilities of excellence, and to distinguish themselves by means never tried before.

But folly and idleness often contrive to gratify pride at a cheaper rate: not the qualities which are most illustrious, but those which are of easiest attainment, are selected for imitation; and the honours and rewards which public gratitude has paid to the benefactors of mankind, are expected by wretches who can only imitate them in their vices and defects, or adopt some petty singularities, of which those from whom they are borrowed, were secretly ashamed.

No man rises to such a height as to become conspicuous, but he is on one side censured by undiscerning malice, which reproaches him for his best actions, and slanders his apparent and incontestable excellences; and idolized on the other by ignorant admiration, which exalts his faults and follies, into

virtues. It may be observed, that he by whose intimacy his acquaintances imagine themselves dignified, generally diffuses among them his mien and his habits; and, indeed, without more vigilance than is generally applied to the regulation of the minuter parts of behaviour, it is not easy, when we converse much with one whose general character excites our veneration, to escape all contagion of his peculiarities, even when we do not deliberately think them worthy of our notice, and when they would have excited laughter or disgust had they not been protected by their alliance to nobler qualities, and accidentally consorted with knowledge or with virtue.

The faults of a man loved or honoured, sometimes steal secretly and imperceptibly upon the wise and virtuous, but by injudicious fondness or thoughtless vanity are adopted with design. There is scarce any failing of mind or body, any error of opinion, or depravity of practice, which, instead of producing shame and discontent, its natural effects, has not at one time or other gladdened vanity with the hopes of praise, and been displayed with ostentatious industry by those who sought kindred minds among the wits or heroes, and could prove their relation only by similitude of deformity.

In consequence of this perverse ambition, every habit which reason condemns may be indulged and avowed. When a man is upbraided with his faults, he may, indeed, be pardoned if he endeavours to run for shelter to some celebrated name; but it is not to be suffered that, from the retreats to which he fled from infamy, he should issue again with the confidence of conquests, and call upon mankind for praise. Yet we see men that waste their patrimony in luxury, destroy their health with debauchery, and

enervate their minds with idleness, because there have been some whom luxury never could sink into contempt, nor idleness hinder from the praise of genius.

This general inclination of mankind to copy characters in the gross, and the force which the recommendation of illustrious examples adds to the allurements of vice, ought to be considered by all whose character excludes them from the shades of secrecy, as incitements to scrupulous caution and universal purity of manners. No man, however enslaved to his appetites, or hurried by his passions, can, while he preserves his intellects unimpaired, please himself with promoting the corruption of others. He whose merit has enlarged his influence, would surely wish to exert it for the benefit of mankind. Yet such will be the effect of his reputation, while he suffers himself to indulge in any favourite fault, that they who have no hope to reach his excellence will catch at his failings, and his virtues will be cited to justify the copiers of his vices.

It is particularly the duty of those who consign illustrious names to posterity, to take care lest their readers be misled by ambiguous examples. That writer may be justly condemned as an enemy to goodness, who suffers fondness or interest to confound right with wrong, or to shelter the faults which even the wisest and the best have committed from that ignominy which guilt ought always to suffer, and with which it should be more deeply stigmatized when dignified by its neighbourhood to uncommon worth; since we shall be in danger of beholding it without abhorrence, unless its turpitude be laid open, and the eye secured from the deception of surrounding splendour.

No. 165. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1751.

Ἦν νέος, ἀλλα πένης; νῦν γηρῶν, πλούσιος εἰμί.
Ὦ μόνος ἐκ πάντων οἰκτρὸς ἐν ἀμφοτέροις,
Ὃς τότε μὲν χρῆσθαι δυνάμην, ὅπότ' οὐδὲ ἔν εἶχνο·
Νῦν δ' ὁπότε χρῆσθαι μὴ δύναμαι, τοτ' ἔχω.

ANTIPHILUS.

Young was I once and poor, now rich and old;
A harder case than mine was never told;
Blest with the power to use them—I had none;
Loaded with riches now, the power is gone. F. LEWIS.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

'THE writers who have undertaken the unpromising task of moderating desire, exert all the power of their eloquence, to show that happiness is not the lot of man, and have, by many arguments and examples, proved the instability of every condition by which envy or ambition are excited. They have set before our eyes all the calamities to which we are exposed from the frailty of nature, the influence of accident, or the stratagems of malice; they have terrified greatness with conspiracies, and riches with anxieties, wit with criticism, and beauty with disease.

"All the force of reason, and all the charms of language, are, indeed, necessary to support positions which every man hears with a wish to confute them. Truth finds an easy entrance into the mind when she is introduced by desire, and attended by pleasure; but when she intrudes uncalled, and brings only fear and sorrow in her train, the passes of the in-

tellect are barred against her by prejudice and passion; if she sometimes forces her way by the batteries of argument, she seldom long keeps possession of her conquests, but is ejected by some favoured enemy, or at best obtains only a nominal sovereignty, without influence and without authority.

"That life is short we are all convinced, and yet suffer not that conviction to repress our projects or limit our expectations; that life is miserable we all feel, and yet we believe that the time is near when we shall feel it no longer. But to hope happiness and immortality is equally vain. Our state may, indeed, be more or less imbittered, as our duration may be more or less contracted; yet the utmost felicity which we can ever attain will be little beter than alleviation of misery, and we shall always feel more pain from our wants than pleasure from our enjoyments. The incident which I am going to relate will show, that to destroy the effect of all our success. it is not necessary that any signal calamity should fall upon us, that we should be harassed by implacable persecution, or excruciated by irremediable pains; the brightest hours of prosperity have their clouds, and the stream of life, if it is not ruffled by obstructions, will grow putrid by stagnation.

"My father resolving not to imitate the folly of his ancestors, who had hitherto left the younger sons incumbrances on the eldest, destined me to a lucrative profession; and I being careful to lose no opportunity of improvement, was, at the usual time in which young men enter the world, well qualified for the exercise of the business which I had chosen.

"My eagerness to distinguish myself in public, and my impatience of the narrow scheme of life to which my indigence confined me, did not suffer me

to continue long in the town where I was born. I went away as from a place of confinement, with a resolution to return no more, till I should be able to dazzle with my splendour those who now looked upon me with contempt, to reward those who had paid honours to my dawning merit, and to show all who had suffered me to glide by them unknown and neglected, how much they mistook their interest in omitting to propitiate a genius like mine.

"Such were my intentions when I sallied forth into the unknown world, in quest of riches and honours, which I expected to procure in a very short time; for what could withhold them from industry and knowledge? He that indulges hope will always be disappointed. Reputation I very soon obtained; but as merit is much more cheaply acknowledged than rewarded, I did not find myself yet enriched in proportion to my celebrity.

"I had, however, in time surmounted the obstacles by which envy and competition obstruct the first attempts of a new claimant, and saw my opponents and censurers tacitly confessing their despair of success, by courting my friendship and yielding to my influence. They who once pursued me, were now satisfied to escape from me; and they who had before thought me presumptuous in hoping to overtake them, had now their utmost wish, if they were permitted at no great distance quietly to follow me.

"My wants were not madly multiplied as my acquisitions increased, and the time came at length, when I thought myself enabled to gratify all reasonable desires, and when, therefore, I resolved to enjoy that plenty and serenity which I had been hitherto labouring to procure, to enjoy them while I was yet neither crushed by age into infirmity, nor so habituated to a particular manner of life

as to be unqualified for new studies or entertainments.

"I now quitted my profession, and to set myself at once free from all importunities to resume it, changed my residence, and devoted the remaining part of my time to quiet and amusement. Amidst innumerable projects of pleasure which restless idleness incited me to form, and of which most, when they came to the moment of execution, were rejected for others of no longer continuance, some accident revived in my imagination the pleasing ideas of my native place. It was now in my power to visit those from whom I had been so long absent, in such a manner as was consistent with my former resolution, and I wondered how it could happen that I had so long delayed my own happiness.

"Full of the admiration which I should excite, and the homage which I should receive, I dressed my servants in a more ostentatious livery, purchased a magnificent chariot, and resolved to dazzle the inhabitants of the little town with an unexpected blaze of greatness.

"While the preparations that vanity required were made for my departure, which, as workmen will not easily be hurried beyond their ordinary rate, I thought very tedious, I solaced my impatience, with imagining the various censures that my appearance would produce, the hopes which some would feel from my bounty, the terror which my power would strike on others; the awkward respect with which I should be accosted by timorous officiousness; and the distant reverence with which others, less familiar to splendour and dignity, would be contented to gaze upon me. I deliberated a long time, whether I should immediately descend to a level with my former acquaintances, or make my conde-

scension more grateful by a gentle transition from haughtiness and reserve. At length, I determined to forget some of my companions, till they discovered themselves by some indubitable token, and to receive the congratulations of others upon my good fortune with indifference, to show that I always expected what I had now obtained. The acclamations of the populace I purposed to reward with six hogsheads of ale, and a roasted ox, and then recommend to them to return to their work.

"At last all the trappings of grandeur were fitted, and I began the journey of triumph, which I could have wished to have ended in the same moment, but my horses felt none of their master's ardour, and I was shaken four days upon rugged roads. I then entered the town, and having graciously let fall the glasses, that my person might be seen, passed slowly through the street. The noise of the wheels brought the inhabitants to their doors, but I could not perceive that I was known by them. At last I alighted, and my name, I suppose, was told by my servants, for the barber stept from the opposite house, and seized me by the hand with honest joy in his countenance, which, according to the rule that I had prescribed to myself, I repressed with a frigid graciousness. The fellow, instead of sinking into dejection, turned away with contempt, and left me to consider how the second salutation should be received. The next friend was better treated, for I soon found that I must purchase by civility that regard which I had expected to enforce by insolence.

"There was yet no smoke of bonfires, no harmony of bells, no shout of crowds, nor riot of joy; the business of the day went forward as before; and after having ordered a splendid supper, which no

man came to partake, and which my chagrin hindered me from tasting, I went to bed, where the vexation of disappointment overpowered the fatigue of my journey, and kept me from sleep.

"I rose so much humbled by those mortifications, as to inquire after the present state of the town, and found that I had been absent too long to obtain the triumph which had flattered my expectation. Of the friends whose compliments I expected, some had long ago moved to distant provinces, some had lost, in the maladies of age, all sense of another's prosperity, and some had forgotten our former intimacy amidst care and distresses. Of three whom I had resolved to punish for their former offences by a longer continuance of neglect, one was, by his own industry, raised above my scorn, and two were sheltered from it in the grave. All those whom I loved, feared, or hated, all whose envy or whose kindness I had hopes of contemplating with pleasure, were swept away, and their place was filled by a new generation with other views and other competitions; and, among many proofs of the impotence of wealth, I found that it conferred upon me very few distinctions in my native place.

"I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

"SEROTINUS."

No. 166. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1751.

Semper eris pauper, si pauper es, Æmiliane:
Dantur opes nulli nunc nisi divitibus.

MART. EP. V. 82.

Once poor, my friend, still poor you must remain,
The rich alone have all the means of gain.

EDW. CAVE.

No complaint has been more frequently repeated in all ages than that of the neglect of merit associated with poverty, and the difficulty with which valuable or pleasing qualities force themselves into view, when they are obscured by indigence. It has been long observed, that native beauty has little power to charm without the ornaments which fortune bestows, and that to want the favour of others is often sufficient to hinder us from obtaining it.

Every day discovers that mankind are not yet convinced of their error, or that their conviction is without power to influence their conduct; for poverty still continues to produce contempt, and still obstructs the claims of kindred and of virtue. The eye of wealth is elevated towards higher stations, and seldom descends to examine the actions of those who are placed below the level of its notice, and who in distant regions and lower situations are struggling with distress, or toiling for bread. Among the multitudes overwhelmed with insuperable calamity, it is common to find those whom a very little assistance would enable to support themselves with decency, and who yet cannot obtain from near rela-

tions what they see hourly lavished in ostentation, luxury, or frolic.

There are natural reasons why poverty does not easily conciliate affection. He that has been confined from his infancy to the conversation of the lowest classes of mankind, must necessarily want those accomplishments which are the usual means of attracting favour; and though truth, fortitude, and probity, give an indisputable right to reverence and kindness, they will not be distinguished by common eyes, unless they are brightened by elegance of manners, but are cast aside like unpolished gems, of which none but the artist knows the intrinsic value, till their asperities are smoothed and their incrustations rubbed away.

The grossness of vulgar habits obstructs the efficacy of virtue, as impurity and harshness of style impair the force of reason, and rugged numbers turn off the mind from artifice of disposition and fertility of invention. Few have strength of reason to overrule the perceptions of sense; and yet fewer have curiosity or benevolence to struggle long against the first impression: he therefore who fails to please in his salutation and address, is at once rejected, and never obtains an opportunity of showing his latent excellences or essential qualities.

It is, indeed, not easy to prescribe a successful manner of approach to the distressed or necessitous, whose condition subjects every kind of behaviour equally to miscarriage. He whose confidence of merit incites him to meet without any apparent sense of inferiority the eyes of those who flattered themselves with their own dignity, is considered as an insolent leveller, impatient of the just prerogatives of rank and wealth, eager to usurp the station to which he has no right, and to confound

the subordinations of society; and who would contribute to the exaltation of that spirit which even want and calamity are not able to restrain from rudeness and rebellion.

But no better success will commonly be found to attend servility and dejection, which often give pride the confidence to treat them with contempt. A request made with diffidence and timidity is easily denied, because the petitioner himself seems to doubt its fitness.

Kindness is generally reciprocal; we are desirous of pleasing others, because we receive pleasure from them; but by what means can the man please, whose attention is engrossed by his distresses, and who has no leisure to be officious; whose will is restrained by his necessities, and who has no power to confer benefits; whose temper is, perhaps, vitiated by misery, and whose understanding is impeded by ignorance?

It is yet a more offensive discouragement, that the same actions performed by different hands produce different effects, and, instead of rating the man by his performances, we rate, too frequently, the performance by the man. It sometimes happens in the combinations of life, that important services are performed by inferiors; but though their zeal and activity may be paid by pecuniary rewards, they seldom excite that flow of gratitude, or obtain that accumulation of recompense, with which all think it their duty to acknowledge the favour of those who descend to their assistance from a higher elevation. To be obliged, is to be in some respect inferior to another; and few willingly indulge the memory of an action which raises one whom they have always been accustomed to think below them, but satisfy themselves with faint praise and penurious payment,

and then drive it from their own minds, and endeavour to conceal it from the knowledge of others.

It may be always objected to the services of those who can be supposed to want a reward, that they were produced not by kindness but interest; they are therefore, when they are no longer wanted, easily disregarded as arts of insinuation, or stratagems of selfishness. Benefits which are received as gifts from wealth, are exacted as debts from indigence; and he that in a high station is celebrated for superfluous goodness, would, in a meaner condition, have barely been confessed to have done his duty.

It is scarcely possible for the utmost benevolence to oblige, when exerted under the disadvantages of great inferiority; for by the habitual arrogance of wealth, such expectations are commonly formed as no zeal or industry can satisfy; and what regard can he hope, who has done less than was demanded from him?

There are, indeed, kindnesses conferred which were never purchased by precedent favours; and there is an affection not arising from gratitude or gross interest, by which similar natures are attached to each other, without prospect of any other advantage than the pleasure of exchanging sentiments, and the hope of confirming their esteem of themselves by the approbation of each other. But this spontaneous fondness seldom rises at the sight of poverty, which every one regards with habitual contempt, and of which the applause is no more courted by vanity, than the countenance is solicited by ambition. The most generous and disinterested friendship must be resolved at last into the love of ourselves; he, therefore, whose reputation or dignity inclines us to consider his esteem as a testimonial of desert, will always find our hearts open to his endearments.

We every day see men of eminence followed with all the obsequiousness of dependence, and courted with all the blandishments of flattery, by those who want nothing from them but professions of regard, and who think themselves liberally rewarded by a bow, a smile, or an embrace.

But those prejudices which every mind feels more or less in favour of riches, ought, like other opinions which only custom and example have impressed upon us, to be in time subjected to reason. We must learn how to separate the real character from extraneous adhesions and casual circumstances, to consider closely him whom we are about to adopt or to reject; to regard his inclinations as well as his actions; to trace out those virtues which lie torpid in the heart for want of opportunity, and those vices that lurk unseen by the absence of temptation; that when we find worth faintly shooting in the shades of obscurity, we may let in light and sunshine upon it, and ripen barren volition into efficacy and power.

No. 167. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1751.

Candida perpetuo reside, Concordia, lecto,
Tamque pari semper sit Venus æqua jugo,
Diligat ipsa senem quondam, sed et illa marito
Tunc quoque cum fuerit, non videatur anus.

MART. EP. iv. 13. 7.

Their nuptial bed may smiling concord dress,
And Venus still the happy union bless!
Wrinkled with age, may mutual love and truth
To their dim eyes recall the bloom of youth!

F. LEWIS.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

"IT is not common to envy those with whom we cannot easily be placed in comparison. Every man sees without malevolence the progress of another in the tracks of life, which he has himself no desire to tread, and hears, without inclination to cavils or contradiction, the renown of those whose distance will not suffer them to draw the attention of mankind from his own merit. The sailor never thinks it necessary to contest the lawyer's abilities; nor would The Rambler, however jealous of his reputation, be much disturbed by the success of rival wits at Agra or Ispahan.

"We do not, therefore, ascribe to you any superlative degree of virtue, when we believe that we may inform you of our change of condition without danger of malignant fascination; and that when you read of the marriage of your correspondents

Hymenæus and Tranquilla, you will join your wishes to those of their other friends for the happy event of an union in which caprice and selfishness had so little part.

"There is at least this reason why we should be less deceived in our connubial hopes than many who enter into the same state, that we have allowed our minds to form no unreasonable expectations, nor vitiated our fancies, in the soft hours of courtship, with visions of felicity which human power cannot bestow, or of perfection which human virtue cannot attain. That impartiality with which we endeavoured to inspect the manners of all whom we have known was never so much overpowered by our passion, but that we discovered some faults and weaknesses in each other; and joined our hands in conviction, that as there are advantages to be enjoined in marriage, there are inconveniences likewise to be endured; and that, together with confederate intellects and auxiliary virtues, we must find different opinions and opposite inclinations.

"We however flatter ourselves, for who is not flattered by himself as well as by others on the day of marriage, that we are eminently qualified to give mutual pleasure. Our birth is without any such remarkable disparity as can give either an opportunity of insulting the other with pompous names and splendid alliances, or of calling in upon any domestic controversy the overbearing assistance of powerful relations. Our fortune was equally suitable, so that we meet without any of those obligations which always produce reproach or suspicion of reproach, which, though they may be forgotten in the gayeties of the first month, no delicacy will always suppress, or of which the suppression must be considered as a new favour, to be repaid by tameness and submis-

sion, till gratitude takes the place of love, and the desire of pleasing degenerates by degrees into the fear of offending.

"The settlements caused no delay; for we did not trust our affairs to the negotiation of wretches who would have paid their court by multiplying stipulations. Tranquilla scorned to detain any part of her fortune from him into whose hands she delivered up her person; and Hymenæus thought no act of baseness more criminal than his who enslaves his wife by her own generosity, who by marrying without a jointure condemns her to all the dangers of accident and caprice, and at last boasts his liberality, by granting what only the indiscretion of her kindness enabled him to withhold. He therefore received on the common terms the portion which any other woman might have brought him, and reserved all the exuberance of acknowledgment for those excellences which he has yet been able to discover only in Tranquilla.

"We did not pass the weeks of courtship like those who consider themselves as taking the last draught of pleasure, and resolve not to quit the bowl without a surfeit, or who know themselves about to set happiness to hazard, and endeavour to lose their sense of danger in the ebriety of perpetual amusement, and whirl round the gulf before they sink. Hymenæus often repeated a medical axiom, that the succours of sickness ought not to be wasted in health. We know that however our eyes may yet sparkle, and our hearts bound at the presence of each other, the time of listlessness and satiety, of peevishness and discontent, must come at last, in which we shall be driven for relief to shows and recreations; that the uniformity of life must be sometimes diversified, and the vacuities of conversation sometimes supplied.

We rejoice in the reflection that we have stores of novelty yet unexhausted, which may be opened when repletion shall call for change, and gratifications yet untasted, by which life, when it shall become vapid or bitter, may be restored to its former sweetness and sprightliness, and again irritate the appetite, and again sparkle in the cup.

"Our time will probably be less tasteless than that of those whom the authority and avarice of parents unite almost without their consent in their early years, before they have accumulated any fund of reflection, or collected materials for mutual entertainment. Such we have often seen rising in the morning to cards, and retiring in the afternoon to doze, whose happiness was celebrated by their neighbours, because they happened to grow rich by parsimony, and to be kept quiet by insensibility, and agreed to eat and to sleep together.

"We have both mingled with the world, and are, therefore, no stranger to the faults and virtues, the designs and competitions, the hopes and fears of our contemporaries. We have both amused our leisure with books, and can, therefore, recount the events of former times, or cite the dictates of ancient wisdom. Every occurrence furnishes us with some hint which one or the other can improve, and if it should happen that memory or imagination fail us, we can retire to no idle or unimproving solitude.

"Though our characters, beheld at a distance, exhibit this general resemblance, yet a nearer inspection discovers such a dissimilitude of our habitudes and sentiments, as leaves each some peculiar advantages, and affords that *concordia discors*, that suitable disagreement which is always necessary to intellectual harmony. There may be a total diversity of ideas which admits no participation of the same

delight, and there may likewise be such a conformity of notions, as leaves neither any thing to add to the decisions of the other. With such contrariety there can be no peace, with such similarity there can be no pleasure. Our reasonings, though often formed upon different views, terminate generally in the same conclusion. Our thoughts, like rivulets issuing from distant springs, are each impregnated in its course with various mixtures, and tinged by infusions unknown to the other, yet at last easily unite into one stream, and purify themselves by the gentle effervescence of contrary qualities.

"These benefits we receive in a greater degree, as we converse without reserve, because we have nothing to conceal. We have no debts to be paid by imperceptible deductions from avowed expenses, no habits to be indulged by the private subserviency of a favoured servant, no private interviews with needy relations, no intelligence with spies placed upon each other. We considered marriage as the most solemn league of perpetual friendship, a state from which artifice and concealment are to be banished forever, and in which every act of dissimulation is a breach of faith.

"The impetuous vivacity of youth, and that ardour of desire, which the first sight of pleasure naturally produces, have long ceased to hurry us into irregularity and vehemence; and experience has shown us that few gratifications are too valuable to be sacrificed to complaisance. We have thought it convenient to rest from the fatigue of pleasure, and now only continue that course of life into which we had before entered, confirmed in our choice by mutual approbation, supported in our resolution by mutual encouragement, and assisted in our efforts by mutual exhortation.

"Such, Mr. Rambler, is our prospect of life, a prospect which, as it is beheld with more attention, seems to open more extensive happiness, and spreads by degrees into the boundless regions of eternity. But if all our prudence has been vain, and we are doomed to give one instance more of the uncertainty of human discernment, we shall comfort ourselves amidst our disappointments, that we were not betrayed but by such delusions as caution could not escape, since we sought happiness only in the arms of virtue.

"We are, Sir,

"Your humble servants,

"HYMENÆUS,

"TRANQUILLA."

No. 168. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1751.

—Decipit
Frons prima multos, rara mens intelligit
Quod interiore condidit cura angulo. PHÆDRUS.

The tinsel glitter, and the specious mien,
Delude the most; few pry behind the scene.

IT has been observed by Boileau, 'that a mean or common thought expressed in pompous diction, generally pleases more than a new or noble sentiment delivered in low and vulgar language; because the number is greater of those whom custom has

enabled to judge of words, than whom study has qualified to examine things.'

This solution might satisfy, if such only were offended with meanness of expression as are unable to distinguish propriety of thought, and to separate propositions or images from the vehicles by which they are conveyed to the understanding. But this kind of disgust is by no means confined to the ignorant or superficial; it operates uniformly and universally upon readers of all classes; every man, however profound or abstracted, perceives himself irresistibly alienated by low terms; they who profess the most zealous adherence to truth are forced to admit that she owes part of her charms to her ornaments; and loses much of her power over the soul, when she appears disgraced by a dress uncouth or ill adjusted.

We are all offended by low terms, but are not disgusted alike by the same compositions, because we do not all agree to censure the same terms as low. No word is naturally or intrinsically meaner than another; our opinion, therefore, of words, as of other things arbitrarily and capriciously established, depends wholly upon accident and custom. The cottager thinks those apartments splendid and spacious, which an inhabitant of palaces will despise for their inelegance; and to him who has passed most of his hours with the delicate and polite, many expressions will seem sordid, which another equally acute, may hear without offence; but a mean term never fails to displease him to whom it appears mean, as poverty is certainly and invariably despised, though he who is poor in the eyes of some, may by others be envied for his wealth.

Words become low by the occasions to which they

are applied, or the general character of them who use them; and the disgust which they produce arises from the revival of those images with which they are commonly united. Thus if, in the most solemn discourse, a phrase happens to occur which has been successfully employed in some ludicrous narrative, the gravest auditor finds it difficult to refrain from laughter, when they who are not prepossessed by the same accidental association, are utterly unable to guess the reason of his merriment. Words which convey ideas of dignity in one age, are banished from elegant writing or conversation in another, because they are in time debased by vulgar mouths, and can be no longer heard without the involuntary recollection of unpleasing images.

When Macbeth is confirming himself in the horrid purpose of stabbing his king, he breaks out amidst his emotions into a wish natural to a murderer: —

> —Come, thick night!
> And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
> That my keen knife see not the wound it makes;
> Nor Heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
> To cry, Hold! hold!

In this passage is exerted all the force of poetry, that force which calls new powers into being, which embodies sentiment, and animates matter; yet, perhaps, scarce any man now peruses it without some disturbance of attention from the counteraction of the words to the ideas. What can be more dreadful than to implore the presence of night, invested not in common obscurity, but in the smoke of hell? Yet the efficacy of this invocation is destroyed by the insertion of an epithet now seldom heard but in the stable, and dun night may come or go without any other notice than contempt.

If we start into raptures when some hero of the Iliad tells us that *δόρυ μαίνεται*, his lance rages with eagerness to destroy; if we are alarmed at the terror of the soldiers commanded by Cæsar to hew down the sacred grove, "who dreaded," says Lucan, "lest the axe aimed at the oak should fly back upon the striker,"

> —*Si robora sacra ferirent,*
> *In sua credebant redituras membra secures.*

> None dares with impious steel the grove to rend,
> Lest on himself the destined stroke descend;

we cannot surely but sympathize with the horrors of a wretch about to murder his master, his friend, his benefactor, who suspects that the weapon will refuse its office, and start back from the breast which he is preparing to violate. Yet this sentiment is weakened by the name of an instrument used by butchers and cooks in the meanest employment; we do not immediately conceive that any crime of importance is to be committed with a knife; or who does not, at last, from a long habit of connecting a knife with sordid offices, feel aversion rather than terror?

Macbeth proceeds to wish, in the madness of guilt, that the inspection of Heaven may be intercepted, and that he may, in the involutions of infernal darkness, escape the eye of Providence. This is the utmost extravagance of determined wickedness; yet this is so debased by two unfortunate words, that while I endeavour to impress on my readers the energy of the sentiment, I can scarce check my risibility, when the expression forces itself upon my mind; for who, without some relaxation of his gravity, can hear of the avengers of guilt peeping through a blanket?

These imperfections of diction are less obvious to the reader, as he is less acquainted with common usages; they are, therefore, wholly imperceptible to a foreigner, who learns our language from books, and will strike a solitary academic less forcibly than a modish lady.

Among the numerous requisites that must concur to complete an author, few are of more importance than an early entrance into the living world. The seeds of knowledge may be planted in solitude, but must be cultivated in public. Argumentation may be taught in colleges, and theories formed in retirement; but the artifice of embellishment, and the powers of attraction, can be gained only by general converse.

An acquaintance with prevailing customs and fashionable elegance is necessary likewise for other purposes. The injury that grand imagery suffers from unsuitable language, personal merit may fear, from rudeness and indelicacy. When the success of Æneas depended on the favour of the queen upon whose coasts he was driven, his celestial protectress thought him not sufficiently secured against rejection by his piety or bravery, but decorated him for the interview with preternatural beauty. Whoever desires for his writings or himself, what none can reasonably contemn, the favour of mankind, must add grace to strength, and make his thoughts agreeable as well as useful. Many complain of neglect who never tried to attract regard. It cannot be expected that the patrons of science or virtue should be solicitous to discover excellences, which they who possess them shade and disguise. Few have abilities so much needed by the rest of the world as to be caressed on their own terms; and he that will not condescend to recommend himself by external

embellishments, must submit to the fate of just sentiment meanly expressed, and be ridiculed and forgotten before he is understood.

No. 169. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1751.

Nec pluteum cœdit, nec demorsos sapit ungues.
PERS. SAT. i. 106.

No blood from bitten nails those poems drew;
But churn'd, like spittle, from the lips they flew.
DRYDEN.

NATURAL historians assert, that whatever is formed for long duration arrives slowly to its maturity. Thus the firmest timber is of tardy growth, and animals generally exceed each other in longevity, in proportion to the time between their conception and their birth.

The same observation may be extended to the offspring of the mind. Hasty compositions, however they please at first by flowery luxuriance, and spread in the sunshine of temporary favour, can seldom endure the change of seasons, but perish at the first blast of criticism, or frost of neglect. When Apelles was reproached with the paucity of his productions, and the incessant attention with which he retouched his pieces, he condescended to make no other answer, than that he painted for perpetuity.

No vanity can more justly incur contempt and

indignation, than that which boasts of negligence and hurry. For who can bear with patience the writer who claims such superiority to the rest of his species, as to imagine that mankind are at leisure for attention to his extemporary sallies, and that posterity will reposit his casual effusions among the treasures of ancient wisdom?

Men have sometimes appeared of such transcendent abilities, that their slightest and most cursory performances excel all that labour and study can enable meaner intellects to compose; as there are regions of which the spontaneous products cannot be equalled in other soils by care and culture. But it is no less dangerous for any man to place himself in this rank of understanding, and fancy that he is born to be illustrious without labour, than to omit the cares of husbandry, and expect from his ground the blossoms of Arabia.

The greatest part of those who congratulate themselves upon their intellectual dignity, and usurp the privileges of genius, are men whom only themselves would ever have marked out as enriched by uncommon liberalities of nature, or entitled to veneration and immortality on easy terms. This ardour of confidence is usually found among those who, having not enlarged their notions by books or conversation, are persuaded, by the partiality which we all feel in our own favour, that they have reached the summit of excellence, because they discover none higher than themselves, and who acquiesce in the first thoughts that occur, because their scantiness of knowledge allows them little choice, and the narrowness of their views affords them no glimpse of perfection, of that sublime idea which human industry has, from the first ages, been vainly toiling to approach. They see a little, and believe there

is nothing beyond their sphere of vision, as the Patuecos of Spain, who inhabited a small valley, conceived the surrounding mountains to be the boundaries of the world. In proportion as perfection is more distinctly conceived, the pleasure of contemplating our own performances will be lessened; it may therefore be observed, that they who most deserve praise are often afraid to decide in favour of their own performances; they know how much is still wanting to their completion, and wait with anxiety and terror the determination of the public. 'I please every one else,' says Tully, 'but never satisfy myself.'

It has often been inquired, why, notwithstanding the advances of latter ages in science, and the assistance which the infusion of so many new ideas has given us, we still fall below the ancients in the art of composition. Some part of their superiority may be justly ascribed to the graces of their language, from which the most polished of the present European tongues are nothing more than barbarous degenerations. Some advantage they might gain merely by priority, which put them in possession of the most natural sentiments, and left us nothing but servile repetition or forced conceits. But the greater part of their praise seems to have been the just reward of modesty and labour. Their sense of human weakness confined them commonly to one study, which their knowledge of the extent of every science engaged them to prosecute with indefatigable diligence.

Among the writers of antiquity, I remember none except Statius who ventures to mention the speedy production of his writings, either as an extenuation of his faults, or a proof of his facility. Nor did Statius, when he considered himself as a candidate

for lasting reputation, think a closer attention unnecessary, but amidst all his pride and indigence, the two great hasteners of modern poems, employed twelve years upon the Thebaid, and thinks his claim to renown proportionate to his labour.

Thebais, multa cruciata lima,
Tentat, audaci fide, Mantuanæ
Gaudia famæ.

Polish'd with endless toil, my lays
At length aspire to Mantuan praise.

Ovid, indeed, apologizes, in his banishment, for the imperfection of his letters, but mentions his want of leisure to polish them as an addition to his calamities; and was so far from imagining revisals and corrections unnecessary, that, at his departure from Rome, he threw his Metamorphoses into the fire, lest he should be disgraced by a book which he could not hope to finish.

It seems not often to have happened that the same writer aspired to reputation in verse and prose; and of those few that attempted such diversity of excellence, I know not that even one succeeded. Contrary characters they never imagined a single mind able to support, and therefore no man is recorded to have undertaken more than one kind of dramatic poetry.

What they had written they did not venture in their first fondness to thrust into the world, but considering the impropriety of sending forth inconsiderately that which cannot be recalled, deferred the publication, if not nine years, according to the direction of Horace, yet till their fancy was cooled after the raptures of invention, and the glare of novelty had ceased to dazzle the judgment.

There were in those days no weekly or diurnal

writers; *multa dies, et multa litura*, 'much time, and many rasures,' were considered as indispensable requisites; and that no other method of attaining lasting praise has been yet discovered, may be conjectured from the blotted manuscripts of Milton now remaining, and from the tardy emission of Pope's compositions, delayed more than once till the incidents to which they alluded were forgotten, till his enemies were secure from his satire, and, what to an honest mind must be more painful, his friends were deaf to his encomiums.

To him, whose eagerness of praise hurries his productions soon into the light, many imperfections are unavoidable, even where the mind furnishes the materials, as well as regulates their disposition, and nothing depends upon search or information. Delay opens new veins of thought, the subject dismissed for a time appears with a new train of dependent images, the accidents of reading or conversation supply new ornaments or allusions, or mere intermission of the fatigue of thinking enables the mind to collect new force and make new excursions. But all those benefits come too late for him, who, when he was weary with labour, snatched at the recompense, and gave his work to his friends and his enemies, as soon as impatience and pride persuaded him to conclude it.

One of the most pernicious effects of haste, is obscurity. He that teems with a quick succession of ideas, and perceives how one sentiment produces another, easily believes that he can clearly express what he so strongly comprehends; he seldom suspects his thoughts of embarrassment, while he preserves in his own memory the series of connection, or his diction of ambiguity, while only one sense is present to his mind. Yet if he has been employed on an

abstruse or complicated argument, he will find, when he has a while withdrawn his mind, and returns as a new reader to his work, that he has only a conjectural glimpse of his own meaning, and that to explain it to those whom he desires to instruct, he must open his sentiments, disentangle his method, and alter his arrangement.

Authors and lovers always suffer some infatuation, from which only absence can set them free; and every man ought to restore himself to the full exercise of his judgment, before he does that which he cannot do improperly, without injuring his honour and his quiet.

No. 170. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1751.

Confiteor; si quid prodest delicta fateri. OVID.

I grant the charge; forgive the fault confessed.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

"I AM one of those beings, from whom many, that melt at the sight of all other misery, think it meritorious to withhold relief; one whom the rigour of virtuous indignation dooms to suffer without complaint, and perish without regard; and whom I myself have formerly insulted in the pride of reputation and security of innocence.

"I am of a good family, but my father was burdened with more children than he could decently

support. A wealthy relation, as he travelled from London to his country seat, condescending to make him a visit, was touched with compassion of his narrow fortune, and resolved to ease him of part of his charge, by taking the care of a child upon himself. Distress on one side, and ambition on the other, were too powerful for parental fondness, and the little family passed in review before him, that he might make his choice. I was then ten years old, and, without knowing for what purpose I was called to my great cousin, endeavoured to recommend myself by my best courtesy, sung him my prettiest song, told the last story that I had read, and so much endeared myself by my innocence, that he declared his resolution to adopt me, and to educate me with his own daughters.

"My parents felt the common struggles at the thought of parting, and

> Some natural tears they dropp'd, but wiped them soon.

They considered, not without that false estimation of the value of wealth which poverty long continued always produces, that I was raised to higher rank than they could give me, and to hopes of more ample fortune than they could bequeathe. My mother sold some of her ornaments to dress me in such a manner as might secure me from contempt at my first arrival; and when she dismissed me, pressed me to her bosom with an embrace that I still feel, gave me some precepts of piety, which, however neglected, I have not forgotten, and uttered prayers for my final happiness, of which I have not yet ceased to hope that they will at last be granted.

"My sisters envied my new finery, and seemed not much to regret our separation; my father conducted me to the stage-coach with a kind of cheerful

tenderness; and in a very short time. I was transported to splendid apartments and a luxurious table, and grew familiar to show, noise, and gayety.

"In three years my mother died, having implored a blessing on her family with her last breath. I had little opportunity to indulge a sorrow which there was none to partake with me, and therefore soon ceased to reflect much upon my loss. My father turned all his care upon his other children, whom some fortunate adventurers and unexpected legacies enabled him, when he died four years after my mother, to leave in a condition above their expectations.

"I should have shared the increase of his fortune and had once a portion assigned me in his will; but my cousin assuring him that all care for me was needless, since he had resolved to place me happily in the world, directed him to divide my part amongst my sisters.

"Thus I was thrown upon dependence without resource. Being now at an age in which young women are initiated into company, I was no longer to be supported in my former character, but at considerable expense; so that partly lest I should waste money, and partly lest my appearance might draw too many compliments and assiduities, I was insensibly degraded from my equality, and enjoyed few privileges above the head servant, but that of receiving no wages.

"I felt every indignity, but knew that resentment would precipitate my fall. I therefore endeavoured to continue my importance by little services and active officiousness, and for a time preserved myself from neglect, by withdrawing all pretences to competition, and studying to please rather than to shine. But my interest, notwithstanding this expedient,

hourly declined, and my cousin's favourite maid began to exchange repartees with me, and consult me about the alterations of a cast gown.

"I was now completely depressed; and though I had seen mankind enough to know the necessity of outward cheerfulness, I often withdrew to my chamber to vent my grief, or turn my condition in my mind, and examine by what means I might escape from perpetual mortification. At last, my schemes and sorrows were interrupted by a sudden change of my relation's behaviour, who one day took an occasion, when we were left together in a room, to bid me suffer myself no longer to be insulted, but assume the place which he always intended me to hold in the family. He assured me that his wife's preference of her own daughters should never hurt me; and, accompanying his professions with a purse of gold, ordered me to bespeak a rich suit at the mercer's, and to apply privately to him for money when I wanted it, and insinuate that my other friends supplied me, which he would take care to confirm.

"By this stratagem, which I did not then understand, he filled me with tenderness and gratitude, compelled me to repose on him as my only support, and produced a necessity of private conversation. He often appointed interviews at the house of an acquaintance, and sometimes called on me with a coach, and carried me abroad. My sense of his favour, and the desire of retaining it, disposed me to unlimited complaisance, and though I saw his kindness grow every day more fond, I did not suffer any suspicion to enter my thoughts. At last, the wretch took advantage of the familiarity which he enjoyed as my relation, and the submission which he exacted as benefactor, to complete the ruin of an

orphan, whom his own promises had made indigent, whom his indulgence had melted, and his authority subdued.

"I know not why it should afford subject of exultation, to overpower on any terms the resolution, or surprise the caution of a girl; but of all the boasters that deck themselves in the spoils of innocence and beauty, they surely have the least pretensions to triumph, who submit to owe their success to some casual influence. They neither employ the graces of fancy, nor the force of understanding, in their attempts; they cannot please their vanity with the art of their approaches, the delicacy of their adulations, the elegance of their address, or the efficacy of their eloquence; nor applaud themselves as possessed of any qualities, by which affection is attracted. They surmount no obstacles, they defeat no rivals, but attack only those who cannot resist, and are often content to possess the body, without any solicitude to gain the heart.

"Many of these despicable wretches does my present acquaintance with infamy and wickedness enable me to number among the heroes of debauchery; reptiles whom their own servants would have despised, had they not been their servants, and with whom beggary would have disdained intercouse, had she not been allured by hopes of relief. Many of the beings which are now rioting in taverns, or shivering in the streets, have been corrupted, not by arts of gallantry which stole gradually upon the affections and laid prudence asleep, but by the fear of losing benefits which were never intended, or of incurring resentment which they could not escape; some have been frighted by masters, and some awed by guardians, into ruin.

"Our crime had its usual consequence, and he

soon perceived that I could not long continue in his family. I was distracted at the thought of the reproach which I now believed inevitable. He comforted me with hopes of eluding all discovery, and often upbraided me with the anxiety, which perhaps none but himself saw in my countenance; but at last mingled his assurances of protection and maintenance with menaces of total desertion, if, in the moments of perturbation, I should suffer his secret to escape, or endeavour to throw on him any part of my infamy.

"Thus passed the dismal hours till my retreat could no longer be delayed. It was pretended that my relations had sent for me to a distant county, and I entered upon a state which shall be described in my next letter.

"I am, Sir, &c.,
"MISELLA."

No. 171. TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1751.

—Tædet cœli convexa tueri. VIRG. ÆN. iv. 451.

Dark is the sun, and loathsome is the day.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

"MISELLA now sits down to continue her narrative. I am convinced that nothing would more powerfully preserve youth from irregularity, or guard inexperience from seduction, than a just de-

scription of the condition into which the wanton plunges herself, and therefore hope that my letter may be a sufficient antidote to my example.

"After the distraction, hesitation, and delays which the timidity of guilt naturally produces, I was removed to lodgings in a distant part of the town, under one of the characters commonly assumed upon such occasions. Here being, by my circumstances, condemned to solitude, I passed most of my hours in bitterness and anguish. The conversation of the people with whom I was placed was not at all capable of engaging my attention, or dispossessing the reigning ideas. The books which I carried to my retreat were such as heightened my abhorrence of myself; for I was not so far abandoned as to sink voluntarily into corruption, or endeavour to conceal from my own mind the enormity of my crime.

"My relation remitted none of his fondness, but visited me so often, that I was sometimes afraid lest his assiduity should expose him to suspicion. Whenever he came he found me weeping, and was therefore less delightfully entertained than he expected. After frequent expostulations upon the unreasonableness of my sorrow, and innumerable protestations of everlasting regard, he at last found that I was more affected with the loss of my innocence than the danger of my fame, and, that he might not be disturbed by my remorse, began to lull my conscience with the opiates of irreligion. His arguments were such as my course of life has since exposed me often to the necessity of hearing, vulgar, empty, and fallacious; yet they at first confounded me by their novelty, filled me with doubt and perplexity, and interrupted that peace which I began to feel from the sincerity of my repentance, without substituting

any other support. I listened awhile to his impious gabble, but its influence was soon overpowered by natural reason and early education, and the convictions which this new attempt gave me of his baseness completed my abhorrence. I have heard of barbarians, who, when tempests drive ships upon their coast, decoy them to the rocks that they may plunder their lading, and have always thought that wretches, thus merciless in their depredations, ought to be destroyed by a general insurrection of all social beings; yet how light is this guilt to the crime of him, who, in the agitations of remorse, cuts away the anchor of piety, and when he has drawn aside credulity from the paths of virtue, hides the light of Heaven which would direct her to return. I had hitherto considered him as a man equally betrayed with myself by the concurrence of appetite and opportunity; but I now saw, with horror, that he was contriving to perpetuate his gratification, and was desirous to fit me to his purpose by complete and radical corruption.

"To escape, however, was not yet in my power. I could support the expense of my condition, only by the continuance of his favour. He provided all that was necessary, and, in a few weeks, congratulated me upon my escape from the danger which we had both expected with so much anxiety. I then began to remind him of his promise to restore me with my fame uninjured to the world. He promised me in general terms, that nothing should be wanting which his power could add to my happiness, but forbore to release me from my confinement. I knew how much my reception in the world depended upon my speedy return, and was therefore outrageously impatient of his delays, which I now perceived to be only artifices of lewdness. He told me, at last,

with an appearance of sorrow, that all hopes of restoration to my former state were forever precluded; that chance had discovered my secret, and malice divulged it; and that nothing now remained, but to seek a retreat more private, where curiosity or hatred could never find us.

"The rage, anguish, and resentment, which I felt at this account are not to be expressed. I was in so much dread of reproach and infamy, which he represented as pursuing me with full cry, that I yielded myself implicitly to his disposal, and was removed, with a thousand studied precautions, through byways and dark passages, to another house, where I harassed him with perpetual solicitations for a small annuity, that might enable me to live in the country in obscurity and innocence.

"This demand he at first evaded with ardent professions, but in time appeared offended at my importunity and distrust; and having one day endeavoured to soothe me with uncommon expressions of tenderness, when he found my discontent immovable, left me with some inarticulate murmurs of anger. I was pleased that he was at last roused to sensibility, and expecting that at his next visit he would comply with my request, lived with great tranquillity upon the money in my hands, and was so much pleased with this pause of persecution, that I did not reflect how much his absence had exceeded the usual intervals, till I was alarmed with the danger of wanting subsistence. I then suddenly contracted my expenses, but was unwilling to supplicate for assistance. Necessity, however, soon overcame my modesty or my pride, and I applied to him by a letter, but had no answer. I writ in terms more pressing, but without effect. I then sent an agent to inquire after him, who informed

me, that he had quitted his house, and was gone with his family to reside for some time upon his estate in Ireland.

"However shocked at this abrupt departure, I was yet unwilling to believe that he could wholly abandon me, and therefore, by the sale of my clothes, I supported myself, expecting that every post would bring me relief. Thus I passed seven months between hope and dejection, in a gradual approach to poverty and distress, emaciated with discontent, and bewildered with uncertainty. At last my landlady, after many hints of the necessity of a new lover, took the opportunity of my absence to search my boxes, and missing some of my apparel, seized the remainder for rent, and led me to the door.

"To remonstrate against legal cruelty, was vain; to supplicate obdurate brutality, was hopeless. I went away I knew not whither, and wandered about without any settled purpose, unacquainted with the usual expedients of misery, unqualified for laborious offices, afraid to meet an eye that had seen me before, and hopeless of relief from those who were strangers to my former condition. Night came on in the midst of my distraction, and I still continued to wander till the menaces of the watch obliged me to shelter myself in a covered passage.

"Next day, I procured a lodging in the backward garret of a mean house, and employed my landlady to inquire for a service. My applications were generally rejected for want of a character. At length, I was received at a draper's; but when it was known to my mistress that I had only one gown, and that of silk, she was of opinion that I looked like a thief, and without warning hurried me away. I then tried to support myself by my needle; and, by my landlady's recommendation, obtained a

little work from a shop, and for three weeks lived without repining; but when my punctuality had gained me so much reputation, that I was trusted to make up a head of some value, one of my fellow-lodgers stole the lace, and I was obliged to fly from a prosecution.

"Thus driven again into the streets, I lived upon the least that could support me, and at night accommodated myself under pent-houses as well as I could. At length, I became absolutely penniless; and having strolled all day without sustenance, was, at the close of evening, accosted by an elderly man, with an invitation to a tavern. I refused him with hesitation; he seized me by the hand, and drew me into a neighbouring house, where, when he saw my face pale with hunger, and my eyes swelling with tears, he spurned me from him, and bade me cant and whine in some other place; he for his part would take care of his pockets.

"I still continued to stand in the way, having scarcely strength to walk further, when another soon addressed me in the same manner. When he saw the same tokens of calamity, he considered that I might be obtained at a cheap rate, and therefore quickly made overtures, which I had no longer firmness to reject. By this man I was maintained four months in penurious wickedness, and then abandoned to my former condition, from which I was delivered by another keeper.

"In this abject state I have now passed four years, the drudge of extortion and the sport of drunkenness; sometimes the property of one man, and sometimes the common prey of accidental lewdness; at one time tricked up for sale by the mistress of a brothel, at another begging in the streets to be relieved from hunger by wickedness; without any hope in the day but of finding some whom folly or

excess may expose to my allurements, and without any reflections at night, but such as guilt and terror impress upon me.

"If those who pass their days in plenty and security, could visit for an hour the dismal receptacles to which the prostitute retires from her nocturnal excursions, and see the wretches that lie crowded together, mad with intemperance, ghastly with famine, nauseous with filth, and noisome with disease; it would not be easy for any degree of abhorrence to harden them against compassion, or to repress the desire which they must immediately feel to rescue such numbers of human beings from a state so dreadful.

"It is said that in France they annually evacuate their streets, and ship their prostitutes and vagabonds to their colonies. If the women that infest this city had the same opportunity of escaping from their miseries, I believe very little force would be necessary; for who among them can dread any change? Many of us, indeed, are wholly unqualified for any but the most servile employments, and those perhaps would require the care of a magistrate to hinder them from following the same practices in another country; but others are only precluded by infamy from reformation, and would gladly be delivered on any terms from the necessity of guilt and the tyranny of chance. No place but a populous city can afford opportunities for open prostitution, and where the eye of justice can attend to individuals, those who cannot be made good may be restrained from mischief. For my part, I should exult at the privilege of banishment, and think myself happy in any region that should restore me once again to honesty and peace.

"I am, Sir, &c.,

"MISELLA."

No. 172. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1751.

Sæpe rogare soles qualis sim, Prisce, futurus,
Si fiam locuples, simque repente potens.
Quemquam posse putas mores narrare futuros?
Dic mihi, si fias tu leo, qualis eris.

MART. EP. xii. 94.

Priscus, you 've often ask'd me how I 'd live,
Should fate at once both wealth and honour give.
What soul his future conduct can foresee?—
Tell me what sort of lion you would be. F. LEWIS.

NOTHING has been longer observed, than that a change of fortune causes a change of manners; and that it is difficult to conjecture, from the conduct of him whom we see in a low condition, how he would act, if wealth and power were put into his hands. But it is generally agreed, that few men are made better by affluence or exaltation; and that the powers of the mind, when they are unbound and expanded by the sunshine of felicity, more frequently luxuriate into follies, than blossom into goodness.

Many observations have concurred to establish this opinion, and it is not likely soon to become obsolete, for want of new occasions to revive it. The greater part of mankind are corrupt in every condition, and differ in high and in low stations, only as they have more or fewer opportunities of gratifying their desires, or as they are more or less restrained by human censures. Many vitiate their principles in the acquisition of riches; and who can

wonder that what is gained by fraud and extortion is enjoyed with tyranny and excess?

Yet I am willing to believe that the depravation of the mind by external advantages, though certainly not uncommon, yet approaches not so nearly to universality, as some have asserted in the bitterness of resentment, or heat of declamation.

Whoever rises above those who once pleased themselves with equality, will have many malevolent gazers at his eminence. To gain sooner than others that which all pursue with the same ardour, and to which all imagine themselves entitled, will forever be a crime. When those who started with us in the race of life, leave us so far behind, that we have little hope to overtake them, we revenge our disappointment by remarks on the arts of supplantation by which they gained the advantage, or on the folly and arrogance with which they possess it. Of them, whose rise we could not hinder, we solace ourselves by prognosticating the fall.

It is impossible for human purity not to betray to an eye thus sharpened by malignity, some stains which lay concealed and unregarded while none thought it their interest to discover them; nor can the most circumspect attention, or steady rectitude, escape blame from censors, who have no inclination to approve. Riches therefore, perhaps, do not so often produce crimes as incite accusers.

The common charge against those who rise above their original condition, is that of pride. It is certain that success naturally confirms us in a favourable opinion of our own abilities. Scarce any man is willing to allot to accident, friendship, and a thousand causes, which concur in every event without human contrivance or interposition, the part which they may justly claim in his advancement. We rate

ourselves by our fortune rather than our virtues, and exorbitant claims are quickly produced by imaginary merit. But captiousness and jealousy are likewise easily offended, and to him who studiously looks for an affront, every mode of behaviour will supply it; freedom will be rudeness, and reserve sullenness; mirth will be negligence, and seriousness formality: when he is received with ceremony, distance and respect are inculcated; if he is treated with familiarity, he concludes himself insulted by condescensions.

It must however be confessed, that as all sudden changes are dangerous, a quick transition from poverty to abundance can seldom be made with safety. He that has long lived within sight of pleasures which he could not reach, will need more than common moderation, not to lose his reason in unbounded riot, when they are first put into his power.

Every possession is endeared by novelty; every gratification is exaggerated by desire. It is difficult not to estimate what is lately gained above its real value; it is impossible not to annex greater happiness to that condition from which we are unwillingly excluded, than nature has qualified us to obtain. For this reason, the remote inheritor of an unexpected fortune, may be generally distinguished from those who are enriched in the common course of lineal descent, by his greater haste to enjoy his wealth, by the finery of his dress, the pomp of his equipage, the splendour of his furniture, and the luxury of his table.

A thousand things which familiarity discovers to be of little value, have power for a time to seize the imagination. A Virginian king, when the Europeans had fixed a lock on his door, was so delighted

to find his subjects admitted or excluded with such facility, that it was from morning to evening his whole employment to turn the key. We, among whom locks and keys have been longer in use, are inclined to laugh at this American amusement; yet I doubt whether this paper will have a single reader that may not apply the story to himself, and recollect some hours of his life in which he has been equally overpowered by the transitory charms of trifling novelty.

Some indulgence is due to him whom a happy gale of fortune has suddenly transported into new regions, where unaccustomed lustre dazzles his eyes, and untasted delicacies solicit his appetite. Let him not be considered as lost in hopeless degeneracy, though he for a while forgets the regard due to others, to indulge the contemplation of himself, and in the extravagance of his first raptures expects that his eye should regulate the motions of all that approach him, and his opinion be received as decisive and oracul'ous. His intoxication will give way to time; the madness of joy will fume imperceptibly away; the sense of his insufficiency will soon return; he will remember that the coöperation of others is necessary to his happiness, and learn to conciliate their regard by reciprocal beneficence.

There is, at least, one consideration which ought to alleviate our censures of the powerful and rich. To imagine them chargeable with all the guilt and folly of their own actions, is to be very little acquainted with the world.

De l'absolu pouvoir vous ignorez l'ivresse,
Et du lache flatteur la voix enchanteresse.

Thou hast not known the giddy whirls of fate,
Nor servile flatteries which enchant the great.

MISS A. W.

He that can do much good or harm, will not find many whom ambition or cowardice will suffer to be sincere. While we live upon the level with the rest of mankind, we are reminded of our duty by the admonitions of friends and reproaches of enemies; but men who stand in the highest ranks of society, seldom hear of their faults; if by any accident an opprobrious clamour reaches their ears, flattery is always at hand to pour in her opiates, to quiet conviction, and obtund remorse.

Favour is seldom gained but by conformity in vice. Virtue can stand without assistance, and considers herself as very little obliged by countenance and approbation: but vice, spiritless and timorous, seeks the shelter of crowds, and support of confederacy. The sycophant, therefore, neglects the good qualities of his patron, and employs all his art on his weaknesses and follies, regales his reigning vanity, or stimulates his prevalent desire.

Virtue is sufficiently difficult with any circumstances, but the difficulty is increased when reproof and advice are frighted away. In common life, reason and conscience have only the appetites and passions to encounter; but in higher stations, they must oppose artifice and adulation. He, therefore, that yields to such temptations, cannot give those who look upon his miscarriage much reason for exultation, since few can justly presume that from the same snare they should have been able to escape.

No. 173. TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1751.

— *Quò virtus, quò ferat error?* HOR. ARS POET. 308.

Now say, where virtue stops, and vice begins?

As any action or posture, long continued, will distort and disfigure the limbs; so the mind likewise is crippled and contracted by perpetual application to the same set of ideas. It is easy to guess the trade of an artizan by his knees, his fingers, or his shoulders; and there are few among men of the more liberal professions, whose minds do not carry the brand of their calling, or whose conversation does not quickly discover to what class of the community they belong.

These peculiarities have been of great use, in the general hostility which every part of mankind exercises against the rest, to furnish insults and sarcasms. Every art has its dialect, uncouth and ungrateful to all whom custom has not reconciled to its sound, and which therefore becomes ridiculous by a slight misapplication, or unnecessary repetition.

The general reproach with which ignorance revenges the superciliousness of learning, is that of pedantry; a censure which every man incurs, who has at any time the misfortune to talk to those who cannot understand him, and by which the modest and timorous are sometimes frighted from the display of their acquisitions and the exertion of their powers.

The name of a pedant is so formidable to young men when they first sally from their colleges, and is so liberally scattered by those who mean to boast their elegance of education, easiness of manners, and knowledge of the world, that it seems to require particular consideration; since, perhaps, if it were once understood, many a heart might be freed from painful apprehensions, and many a tongue delivered from restraint.

Pedantry is the unseasonable ostentation of learning. It may be discovered either in the choice of a subject, or in the manner of treating it. He is undoubtedly guilty of pedantry, who, when he has made himself master of some abstruse and uncultivated part of knowledge, obtrudes his remarks and discoveries upon those whom he believes unable to judge of his proficiency, and from whom, as he cannot fear contradiction, he cannot properly expect applause.

To this error the student is sometimes betrayed by the natural recurrence of the mind to its common employment, by the pleasure which every man receives from the recollection of pleasing images, and the desire of dwelling upon topics, on which he knows himself able to speak with justness. But because we are seldom so far prejudiced in favour of each other, as to search out for palliations, this failure of politeness is imputed always to vanity; and the harmless collegiate, who perhaps intended entertainment and instruction, or at worst only spoke without sufficient reflection upon the character of his hearers, is censured as arrogant or overbearing, and eager to extend his renown, in contempt of the convenience of society and the laws of conversation.

All discourse of which others cannot partake, is not only an irksome usurpation of the time devoted

to pleasure and entertainment, but, what never fails to excite very keen resentment, an insolent assertion of superiority, and a triumph over less enlightened understandings. The pedant is, therefore, not only heard with weariness, but malignity; and those who conceive themselves insulted by his knowledge, never fail to tell with acrimony how injudiciously it was exerted.

To avoid this dangerous imputation, scholars sometimes divest themselves with too much haste of their academical formality, and in their endeavours to accommodate their notions and their style to common conceptions, talk rather of any thing than of that which they understand, and sink into insipidity of sentiment and meanness of expression.

There prevails among men of letters, an opinion, that all appearance of science is particularly hateful to women; and that, therefore, whoever desires to be well received in female assemblies, must qualify himself by a total rejection of all that is serious, rational, or important; must consider argument or criticism, as perpetually interdicted; and devote all his attention to trifles, and all his eloquence to compliment.

Students often form their notions of the present generation from the writings of the past, and are not very early informed of those changes which the gradual diffusion of knowledge, or the sudden caprice of fashion, produces in the world. Whatever might be the state of female literature in the last century, there is now no longer any danger lest the scholar should want an adequate audience at the tea-table; and whoever thinks it necessary to regulate his conversation by antiquated rules, will be rather despised for his futility than caressed for his politeness.

To talk intentionally in a manner above the comprehension of those whom we address, is unquestionably pedantry; but surely, complaisance requires that no man should, without proof, conclude his company incapable of following him to the highest elevation of his fancy, or the utmost extent of his knowledge. It is always safer to err in favour of others than of ourselves, and therefore we seldom hazard much by endeavouring to excel.

It ought at least to be the care of learning, when she quits her exaltation, to descend with dignity. Nothing is more despicable than the airiness and jocularity of a man bred to severe science and solitary meditation. To trifle agreeably is a secret which schools cannot impart; that gay negligence and vivacious levity, which charm down resistance wherever they appear, are never attainable by him who, having spent his first years among the dust of libraries, enters late into the gay world with an unpliant attention and established habits.

It is observed in the panegyric on Fabricius the mechanist, that, though forced by public employments into mingled conversation, he never lost the modesty and seriousness of the convent, nor drew ridicule upon himself by an affected imitation of fashionable life. To the same praise, every man devoted to learning ought to aspire. If he attempts the softer arts of pleasing, and endeavours to learn the graceful bow and the familiar embrace, the insinuating accent and the general smile, he will lose the respect due to the character of learning, without arriving at the envied honour of doing anything with elegance and facility.

Theophrastus was discovered not to be a native of Athens, by so strict an adherence to the Attic dialect, as showed that he had learned it not by

custom, but by rule. A man not early formed to habitual elegance, betrays, in like manner, the effects of his education, by an unnecessary anxiety of behaviour. It is as possible to become pedantic by fear of pedantry, as to be troublesome by ill-timed civility. There is no kind of impertinence more justly censurable, than his who is always labouring to level thoughts to intellects higher than his own; who apologizes for every word which his own narrowness of converse inclines him to think unusual; keeps the exuberance of his faculties under visible restraint; is solicitous to anticipate inquiries by needless explanations; and endeavours to shade his own abilities, lest weak eyes should be dazzled with their lustre.

No. 174. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1751.

Fœnum habet in cornu, longè fuge; dummodo risum
Excutiat sibi, non hic cuiquam parcet amico.

HOR. SAT. i. 4. 34.

Yonder he drives—avoid that furious beast:
If he may have his jest, he never cares
At whose expense;—nor friend nor patron spares.

FRANCIS.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"MR. RAMBLER,

"THE laws of social benevolence require, that every man should endeavour to assist others by his

experience. He that has at last escaped into port from the fluctuations of chance and the gusts of opposition, ought to make some improvements in the chart of life, by marking the rocks on which he has been dashed, and the shallows where he has been stranded.

"The error into which I was betrayed, when custom first gave me up to my own direction, is very frequently incident to the quick, the sprightly, the fearless, and the gay; to all whose ardour hurries them into precipitate execution of their designs, and imprudent declaration of their opinions; who seldom count the cost of pleasure, or examine the distant consequences of any practice that flatters them with immediate gratification.

"I came forth into the crowded world with the usual juvenile ambition, and desired nothing beyond the title of a wit. Money I considered as below my care; for I saw such multitudes grow rich without understanding, that I could not forbear to look on wealth as an acquisition easy to industry directed by genius, and therefore threw it aside as a secondary convenience, to be procured when my principal wish should be satisfied, and my claim to intellectual excellence universally acknowledged.

"With this view I regulated my behaviour in public, and exercised my meditations in solitude. My life was divided between the care of providing topics for the entertainment of my company, and that of collecting company worthy to be entertained: for I soon found that wit, like every other power, has its boundaries; that its success depends upon the aptitude of others to receive impressions; and that as some bodies, indissoluble by heat, can set the furnace and crucible at defiance, there are minds upon which the rays of fancy may be pointed with-

out effect, and which no fire of sentiment can agitate or exalt.

"It was, however, not long before I fitted myself with a set of companions who knew how to laugh, and to whom no other recommendation was necessary than the power of striking out a jest. Among those I fixed my residence, and for a time enjoyed the felicity of disturbing the neighbours every night with the obstreperous applause which my sallies forced from the audience. The reputation of our club every day increased, and as my flights and remarks were circulated by my admirers, every day brought new solicitations for admission into our society.

"To support this perpetual fund of merriment, I frequented every place of concourse, cultivated the acquaintance of all the fashionable race, and passed the day in a continual succession of visits, in which I collected a treasure of pleasantry for the expenses of the evening. Whatever error of conduct I could discover, whatever peculiarity of manner I could observe, whatever weakness was betrayed by confidence, whatever lapse was suffered by neglect, all was drawn together for the diversion of my wild companions, who, when they had been taught the art of ridicule, never failed to signalize themselves by a zealous imitation, and filled the town on the ensuing day with scandal and vexation, with merriment and shame.

"I can scarcely believe, when I recollect my own practice, that I could have been so far deluded with petty praise, as to divulge the secrets of trust, and to expose the levities of frankness; to waylay the walks of the cautious, and surprise the security of the thoughtless. Yet it is certain, that for many years I heard nothing but with design to tell it, and saw

nothing with any other curiosity than after some failure that might furnish out a jest.

"My heart, indeed, acquits me of deliberate malignity, or interested insidiousness. I had no other purpose than to heighten the pleasure of laughter by communication, nor ever raised any pecuniary advantage from the calamities of others. I led weakness and negligence into difficulties, only that I might divert myself with their perplexities and distresses; and violated every law of friendship, with no other hope than that of gaining the reputation of smartness and waggery.

"I would not be understood to charge myself with any crimes of the atrocious or destructive kind. I never betrayed an heir to gamesters, or a girl to debauchees; never intercepted the kindness of a patron, or sported away the reputation of innocence. My delight was only in petty mischief and momentary vexations, and my acuteness was employed not upon fraud and oppression, which it had been meritorious to detect, but upon harmless ignorance or absurdity, prejudice or mistake.

"This inquiry I pursued with so much diligence and sagacity, that I was able to relate, of every man whom I knew, some blunder or miscarriage; to betray the most circumspect of my friends into follies, by a judicious flattery of his predominant passion; or expose him to contempt, by placing him in circumstances which put his prejudices into action, brought to view his natural defects, or drew the attention of the company on his airs of affectation.

"The power had been possessed in vain if it had never been exerted; and it was not my custom to let any arts of jocularity remain unemployed. My impatience of applause brought me always early to the place of entertainment; and I seldom failed to

lay a scheme with the small knot that first gathered round me, by which some of those whom we expected might be made subservient to our sport. Every man has some favourite topic of conversation, on which, by a feigned seriousness of attention, he may be drawn to expatiate without end. Every man has some habitual contortion of body, or established mode of expression, which never fails to raise mirth if it be pointed out to notice. By premonitions of these particularities, I secured our pleasantry. Our companion entered with his usual gayety, and began to partake of our noisy cheerfulness, when the conversation was imperceptibly diverted to a subject which pressed upon his tender part, and extorted the expected shrug, the customary exclamation, or the predicted remark. A general clamour of joy then burst from all that were admitted to the stratagem. Our mirth was often increased by the triumph of him that occasioned it; for as we do not hastily form conclusions against ourselves, seldom any one suspected that he had exhilarated us otherwise than by his wit.

"You will hear, I believe, with very little surprise, that by this conduct I had in a short time united mankind against me, and that every tongue was diligent in prevention or revenge. I soon perceived myself regarded with malevolence or distrust, but wondered what had been discovered in me either terrible or hateful. I had invaded no man's property; I had rivalled no man's claims; nor had ever engaged in any of those attempts which provoke the jealousy of ambition or the rage of faction. I had lived but to laugh, and make others laugh; and believed that I was loved by all who caressed, and favoured by all who applauded me. I never imagined, that he who, in the mirth of a nocturnal revel,

concurred in ridiculing his friend, would consider, in a cooler hour, that the same trick might be played against himself; or that, even where there is no sense of danger, the natural pride of human nature rises against him, who by general censures lays claim to general superiority.

"I was convinced, by a total desertion, of the impropriety of my conduct; every man avoided, and cautioned others to avoid me. Wherever I came, I found silence and dejection, coldness and terror. No one would venture to speak, lest he should lay himself open to unfavourable representations; the company, however numerous, dropped off at my entrance upon various pretences; and if I retired to avoid the shame of being left, I heard confidence and mirth revive at my departure.

"If those whom I had thus offended could have contented themselves with repaying one insult for another, and kept up the war only by a reciprocation of sarcasms, they might have perhaps vexed, but would never much have hurt me; for no man heartily hates him at whom he can laugh. But these wounds which they give me as they fly, are without cure; this alarm which they spread by their solicitude to escape me, excludes me from all friendship and from all pleasure: I am condemned to pass a long interval of my life in solitude, as a man suspected of infection is refused admission into cities; and must linger in obscurity, till my conduct shall convince the world, that I may be approached without hazard.

"I am, &c.,

"DICACULUS."

No. 175. TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1751.

Rari quippe boni: numero vix sunt totidem, quot
Thebarum portæ, vel divitis ostia Nili.

JUV. SAT. xiii. 26.

Good men are scarce, the just are thinly sown;
They thrive but ill, nor can they last when grown.
And should we count them, and our store compile;
Yet Thebes more gates could show, more mouths the Nile.

CREECH.

NONE of the axioms of wisdom which recommend the ancient sages to veneration, seems to have required less extent of knowledge, or perspicacity of penetration, than the remark of Bias, that *οἱ πλέονες, κακοὶ*, 'the majority are wicked.'

The depravity of mankind is so easily discoverable, that nothing but the desert or the cell can exclude it from notice. The knowledge of crimes intrudes uncalled and undesired. They whom their abstraction from common occurrences hinders from seeing iniquity, will quickly have their attention awakened by feeling it. Even he who ventures not into the world, may learn its corruption in his closet. For what are treatises of morality, but persuasives to the practice of duties, for which no arguments would be necessary, but that we are continually tempted to violate or neglect them? What are all the records of history, but narratives of successive villanies, of treasons and usurpations, massacres and wars?

But, perhaps, the excellence of aphorisms con-

sists not so much in the expression of some rare or abstruse sentiment, as in the comprehension of some obvious and useful truth in a few words. We frequently fall into error and folly, not because the true principles of action are not known, but because, for a time, they are not remembered; and he may, therefore, be justly numbered among the benefactors of mankind, who contracts the great rules of life into short sentences, that may be easily impressed on the memory, and taught by frequent recollection to recur habitually to the mind.

However those who have passed through half the life of man may now wonder that any should require to be cautioned against corruption, they will find that they have themselves purchased their conviction by many disappointments and vexations, which an earlier knowledge would have spared them; and may see, on every side, some entangling themselves in perplexities, and some sinking into ruin, by ignorance or neglect of the maxim of Bias.

Every day sends out, in quest of pleasure and distinction, some heir fondled in ignorance, and flattered into pride. He comes forth with all the confidence of a spirit unacquainted with superiors, and all the benevolence of a mind not yet irritated by opposition, alarmed by fraud, or imbittered by cruelty. He loves all, because he imagines himself the universal favourite. Every exchange of salutation produces new acquaintance, and every acquaintance kindles into friendship.

Every season brings a new flight of beauties into the world, who have hitherto heard only of their own charms, and imagine that the heart feels no passion but that of love. They are soon surrounded by admirers whom they credit, because they tell them only what is heard with delight. Whoever

gazes upon them is a lover; and whoever forces a sigh is pining in despair.

He surely is a useful monitor, who inculcates to these thoughtless strangers that the majority are wicked; who informs them that the train which wealth and beauty draw after them, is lured only by the scent of prey; and that, perhaps, among all those who crowd about them with professions and flatteries, there is not one who does not hope for some opportunity to devour or betray them, to glut himself by their destruction, or to share their spoils with a stronger savage.

Virtue presented singly to the imagination or the reason, is so well recommended by its own graces, and so strongly supported by arguments, that a good man wonders how any can be bad; and they who are yet ignorant of the force of passion and interest, who never observed the arts of seduction, the contagion of example, the gradual descent from one crime to another, or the insensible depravation of the principles by loose conversation, naturally expect to find integrity in every bosom, and veracity on every tongue.

It is, indeed, impossible not to hear from those who have lived longer, of wrongs and falsehoods, of violence and circumvention; but such narratives are commonly regarded by the young, the heady, and the confident, as nothing more than the murmurs of peevishness, or the dreams of dotage; and notwithstanding all the documents of hoary wisdom, we commonly plunge into the world fearless and credulous, without any foresight of danger, or apprehension of deceit.

I have remarked, in a former paper, that credulity is the common failing of unexperienced virtue; and that he who is spontaneously suspicious, may be

justly charged with radical corruption; for if he has not known the prevalence of dishonesty by information, nor had time to observe it with his own eyes, whence can he take his measures of judgment but from himself?

They who best deserve to escape the snares of artifice, are most likely to be entangled. He that endeavours to live for the good of others, must always be exposed to the arts of them who live only for themselves, unless he is taught by timely precepts the caution required in common transactions, and shown at a distance the pitfalls of treachery.

To youth, therefore, it should be carefully inculcated, that to enter the road of life without caution or reserve, in expectation of general fidelity and justice, is to launch on the wide ocean without the instruments of steerage, and to hope that every wind will be prosperous, and that every coast will afford a harbour.

To enumerate the various motives to deceit and injury, would be to count all the desires that prevail among the sons of men; since there is no ambition however petty, no wish however absurd, that by indulgence will not be enabled to overpower the influence of virtue. Many there are who openly and almost professedly regulate all their conduct by their love of money: who have no reason for action or forbearance, for compliance or refusal, than that they hope to gain more by one than by the other. These are, indeed, the meanest and cruellest of human beings, a race with whom, as with some pestiferous animals, the whole creation seems to be at war; but who, however detested or scorned, long continue to add heap to heap, and when they have reduced one to beggary, are still permitted to fasten on another.

Others, yet less rationally wicked, pass their lives in mischief, because they cannot bear the sight of success, and mark out every man for hatred, whose fame or fortune they believe increasing.

Many, who have not advanced to these degrees of guilt, are yet wholly unqualified for friendship, and unable to maintain any constant or regular course of kindness. Happiness may be destroyed not only by union with the man who is apparently the slave of interest, but with him whom a wild opinion of the dignity of perseverance, in whatever cause, disposes to pursue every injury with unwearied and perpetual resentment; with him whose vanity inclines him to consider every man as a rival in every pretension; with him whose airy negligence puts his friend's affairs or secrets in continual hazard, and who thinks his forgetfulness of others excused by his inattention to himself; and with him whose inconstancy ranges without any settled rule of choice through varieties of friendship, and who adopts and dismisses favourites by the sudden impulse of caprice.

Thus numerous are the dangers to which the converse of mankind exposes us, and which can be avoided only by prudent distrust. He, therefore, that, remembering this salutary maxim, learns early to withhold his fondness from fair appearances, will have reason to pay some honours to Bias of Priene, who enabled him to become wise without the cost of experience.

No. 176. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1751.

—*Naso suspendis adunco.* HOR. SAT. i. 6. 5.

On me you turn the nose.

THERE are many vexatious accidents and uneasy situations which raise little compassion for the sufferer, and which no man but those whom they immediately distress, can regard with seriousness. Petty mischiefs that have no influence on futurity, nor extend their effects to the rest of life, are always seen with a kind of malicious pleasure. A mistake or embarrassment, which for the present moment fills the face with blushes, and the mind with confusion, will have no other effect upon those who observe it than that of convulsing them with irresistible laughter. Some circumstances of misery are so powerfully ridiculous, that neither kindness nor duty can withstand them; they bear down love, interest, and reverence, and force the friend, the dependent, or the child, to give way to instantaneous motions of merriment.

Among the principal of comic calamities, may be reckoned the pain which an author, not yet hardened into insensibility, feels at the onset of a furious critic, whose age, rank, or fortune, gives him confidence to speak without reserve; who heaps one objection upon another, and obtrudes his remarks, and enforces his corrections without tenderness or awe.

The author, full of the importance of his work, and anxious for the justification of every syllable, starts and kindles at the slightest attack; the critic, eager to establish his superiority, triumphing in every discovery of failure, and zealous to impress the cogency of his arguments, pursues him from line to line, without cessation or remorse. The critic, who hazards little, proceeds with vehemence, impetuosity, and fearlessness: the author, whose quiet and fame, and life and immortality, are involved in the controversy, tries every art of subterfuge and defence; maintains modestly what he resolves never to yield, and yields unwillingly what cannot be maintained. The critic's purpose is to conquer, the author only hopes to escape; the critic therefore knits his brow and raises his voice, and rejoices whenever he perceives any tokens of pain excited by the pressure of his assertions, or the point of his sarcasms. The author, whose endeavour is at once to mollify and elude his persecutor, composes his features and softens his accents, breaks the force of assault by retreat, and rather steps aside than flies or advances.

As it very seldom happens that the rage of extemporary criticism inflicts fatal or lasting wounds, I know not that the laws of benevolence entitle this distress to much sympathy. The diversion of baiting an author has the sanction of all ages and nations, and is more lawful than the sport of teasing other animals, because, for the most part, he comes voluntarily to the stake, furnished, as he imagines, by the patron powers of literature, with resistless weapons, and impenetrable armour; with the mail of the boar of Erymanth, and the paws of the lion of Nemea.

But the works of genius are sometimes produced by other motives than vanity; and he whom neces-

sity or duty enforces to write is not always so well satisfied with himself, as not to be discouraged by censorious impudence. It may, therefore, be necessary to consider how they whom publication lays open to the insults of such as their ŏbscurity secures against reprisals, may extricate themselves from unexpected encounters.

Vida, a man of considerable skill in the polities of literature, directs his pupil wholly to abandon his defence, and even when he can irrefragably refute all objections, to suffer tamely the exultations of his antagonist.

This rule may, perhaps, be just, when advice is asked and severity solicited, because no man tells his opinion so freely as when he imagines it received with implicit veneration; and critics ought never to be consulted, but while errors may yet be rectified or insipidity suppressed. But when the book has once been dismissed into the world, and can be no more retouched, I know not whether a very different conduct should not be prescribed, and whether firmness and spirit may not sometimes be of use to overpower arrogance and repel brutality. Softness, diffidence, and moderation, will often be mistaken for imbecility and dejection; they lure cowardice to the attack by the hopes of easy victory, and it will soon be found that he whom every man thinks he can conquer, shall never be at peace.

The animadversions of critics are commonly such as may easily provoke the sedatest writer to some quickness of resentment and asperity of reply. A man who by long consideration has familiarized a subject to his own mind, carefully surveyed the series of his thoughts, and planned all the parts of his composition into a regular dependence on each other, will often start at the sinistrous interpreta-

tions or absurd remarks of haste or ignorance, and wonder by what infatuation they have been led away from the obvious sense, and upon what peculiar principles of judgment they decide against him.

The eye of the intellect, like that of the body, is not equally perfect in all, nor equally adapted in any to all objects; the end of criticism is to supply its defects; rules are the instruments of mental vision, which may, indeed, assist our faculties when properly used, but produce confusion and obscurity by unskilful application.

Some seem always to read with the microscope of criticism, and employ their whole attention upon minute elegance, or faults scarcely visible to common observation. The dissonance of a syllable, the recurrence of the same sound, the repetition of a particle, the smallest deviation from propriety, the slightest defect in construction or arrangement, swell before their eyes into enormities. As they discern with great exactness, they comprehend but a narrow compass, and know nothing of the justness of the design, the general spirit of the performance, the artifice of connection, or the harmony of the parts; they never conceive how small a proportion that which they are busy in contemplating bears to the whole, or how the petty inaccuracies with which they are offended, are absorbed and lost in general excellence.

Others are furnished by criticism with a telescope. They see with great clearness whatever is too remote to be discovered by the rest of mankind, but are totally blind to all that lies immediately before them. They discover in every passage some secret meaning, some remote allusion, some artful allegory, or some occult imitation which no other reader ever suspected; but they have no perception of the co-

gency of arguments, the force of pathetic sentiments, the various colours of diction, or the flowery embellishments of fancy; of all that engages the attention of others they are totally insensible, while they pry into worlds of conjecture, and amuse themselves with phantoms in the clouds.

In criticism, as in every other art, we fail sometimes by our weakness, but more frequently by our fault. We are sometimes bewildered by ignorance, and sometimes by prejudice, but we seldom deviate far from the right, but when we deliver ourselves up to the direction of vanity.

No. 177. TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1751.

Turpe est difficiles habere nugas. MART. EP. ii. 86. 9.

Those things which now seem frivolous and slight,
Will be of serious consequence to you,
When they have made you once ridiculous.

ROSCOMMON.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

"WHEN I was, at the usual time, about to enter upon the profession to which my friends had destined me, being summoned, by the death of my father, into the country, I found myself master of an unexpected sum of money, and of an estate which, though not large, was, in my opinion, sufficient to support me in a condition far preferable to the fatigue, de-

pendence, and uncertainty of any gainful occupation. I, therefore, resolved to devote the rest of my life wholly to curiosity, and, without any confinement of my excursions, or termination of my views, to wander over the boundless regions of general knowledge.

"This scheme of life seemed pregnant with inexhaustible variety, and, therefore, I could not forbear to congratulate myself upon the wisdom of my choice. I furnished a large room with all conveniences for study; collected books of every kind; quitted every science at the first perception of disgust; returned to it again as soon as my former ardour happened to revive; and having no rival to depress me by comparison, nor any critic to alarm me with objections, I spent day after day in profound tranquillity, with only so much complacence in my own improvements, as served to excite and animate my application.

"Thus I lived for some years with complete acquiescence in my own plan of conduct, rising early to read, and dividing the latter part of the day between economy, exercise, and reflection. But in time, I began to find my mind contracted and stiffened by solitude. My ease and elegance were sensibly impaired; I was no longer able to accommodate myself with readiness to the accidental current of conversation; my notions grew particular and paradoxical, and my phraseology formal and unfashionable; I spoke, on common occasions, the language of books. My quickness of apprehension, and celerity of reply, had entirely deserted me: when I delivered my opinion, or detailed my knowledge, I was bewildered by an unseasonable interrogatory, disconcerted by any slight opposition, and overwhelmed and lost in dejection, when the small-

est advantage was gained against me in dispute. I became decisive and dogmatical, impatient of contradiction, perpetually jealous of my character, insolent to such as acknowledged my superiority, and sullen and malignant to all who refused to receive my dictates.

"This I soon discovered to be one of those intellectual diseases which a wise man should make haste to cure. I therefore resolved for a time to shut my books, and learn again the art of conversation; to defecate and clear my mind by brisker motions and stronger impulses; and to unite myself once more to the living generation.

"For this purpose I hasted to London, and entreated one of my academical acquaintances, to introduce me into some of the little societies of literature, which are formed in taverns and coffee-houses. He was pleased with an opportunity of showing me to his friends, and soon obtained me admission among a select company of curious men, who met once a week to exhilarate their studies and compare their acquisitions.

"The eldest and most venerable of this society was Hirsutus, who, after the first civilities of my reception, found means to introduce the mention of his favourite studies, by a severe censure of those who want the due regard for their native country. He informed me, that he had early withdrawn his attention from foreign trifles, and that since he begun to addict his mind to serious and manly studies, he had very carefully amassed all the English books that were printed in the black character. This search he had pursued so diligently, that he was able to show the deficiencies of the best catalogues. He had long since completed his Caxton, had three sheets of Treveris unknown to the antiquaries, and

wanted to a perfect Pynson but two volumes, of which one was promised him as a legacy by its present possessor, and the other he was resolved to buy, at whatever price, when Quisquilius's library should be sold. Hirsutus had no other reason for the valuing or slighting a book, than that it was printed in the Roman or the Gothic letter, nor any ideas but such as his favourite volumes had supplied; when he was serious, he expatiated on the narratives of Johan de Trevisa, and when he was merry, regaled us with a quotation from the Shippe of Foles.

"While I was listening to this hoary student, Ferratus entered, in a hurry, and informed us with the abruptness of ecstasy, that this set of halfpence was now complete; he had just received in a handful of change, the piece that he had so long been seeking, and could now defy mankind to outgo his collection of English copper.

"Chartophylax then observed how fatally human sagacity was sometimes baffled, and how often the most valuable discoveries are made by chance. He had employed himself and his emissaries seven years, at great expense, to perfect his series of Gazettes, but had long wanted a single paper, which, when he despaired of obtaining it, was sent him wrapped round a parcel of tobacco.

"Cantilenus turned all his thoughts upon old ballads, for he considered them as the genuine records of the national taste. He offered to show me a copy of The Children in the Wood, which he firmly believed to be of the first edition, and by the help of which, the text might be freed from several corruptions, if this age of barbarity had any claim to such favours from him.

"Many were admitted into this society as inferior members, because they had collected old prints and

neglected pamphlets, or possessed some fragment of antiquity, as the seal of an ancient corporation, the charter of a religious house, the genealogy of a family extinct, or a letter written in the reign of Elizabeth.

"Every one of these virtuosos looked on all his associates as wretches of depraved taste and narrow notions. Their conversation was, therefore, fretful and waspish, their behaviour brutal, their merriment bluntly sarcastic, and their seriousness gloomy and suspicious. They were totally ignorant of all that passes, or has lately passed, in the world; unable to discuss any question of religious, political, or military knowledge; equally strangers to science and politer learning, and without any wish to improve their minds, or any other pleasure than that of displaying rarities, of which they would not suffer others to make the proper use.

"Hirsutus graciously informed me that the number of their society was limited, but that I might sometimes attend as an auditor. I was pleased to find myself in no danger of an honour, which I could not have willingly accepted, nor gracefully refused, and left them without any intention of returning; for I soon found, that the suppression of those habits with which I was vitiated, required association with men very different from this solemn race.

"I am, Sir, &c.,

"VIVACULUS."

It is natural to feel grief or indignation, when any thing, necessary or useful, is wantonly wasted or negligently destroyed; and, therefore, my correspondent cannot be blamed for looking with uneasiness on the waste of life. Leisure and curiosity might soon make great advances in useful knowl-

edge, were they not diverted by minute emulation and laborious trifles. It may, however, somewhat mollify his anger to reflect, that perhaps none of the assembly which he describes was capable of any nobler employment, and that he who does his best, however little, is always to be distinguished from him who does nothing. Whatever busies the mind without corrupting it, has at least this use, that it rescues the day from idleness; and he that is never idle will not often be vicious.

No. 178. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1751.

Pars sanitatis velle sanari fuit. SENECA.

To yield to remedies is half the cure.

Pythagoras is reported to have required from those whom he instructed in philosophy a probationary silence of five years. Whether this prohibition of speech extended to all the parts of this time, as seems generally to be supposed, or was to be observed only in the school, or in the presence of their master, as is more probable, it was sufficient to discover the pupil's disposition; to try whether he was willing to pay the price of learning, or whether he was one of those whose ardour was rather violent than lasting, and who expected to grow wise on other terms than those of patience and obedience.

Many of the blessings universally desired, are

very frequently wanted, because most men, when they should labour, content themselves to complain, and rather linger in a state in which they cannot be at rest, than improve their condition by vigour and resolution.

Providence has fixed the limits of human enjoyment by immovable boundaries, and has set different gratifications at such a distance from each other, that no art or power can bring them together. This great law it is the business of every rational being to understand, that life may not pass away in an attempt to make contradictions consistent, to combine opposite qualities, and to unite things which the nature of their being must always keep asunder.

Of two objects tempting at a distance on contrary sides, it is impossible to approach one but by receding from the other; by long deliberation and dilatory projects, they may be both lost, but can never be both gained. It is, therefore, necessary to compare them, and when we have determined the preference, to withdraw our eyes and our thoughts at once from that which reason directs us to reject. This is more necessary, if that which we are forsaking has the power of delighting the senses or firing the fancy. He that once turns aside to the allurements of unlawful pleasure, can have no security that he shall ever regain the paths of virtue.

The philosophical goddess of Boethius, having related the story of Orpheus, who, when he had recovered his wife from the dominions of death, lost her again by looking back upon her in the confines of light, concludes with a very elegant and forcible application. 'Whoever you are that endeavour to elevate your minds to the illuminations of Heaven, consider yourselves as represented in this fable; for he that is once so far overcome as to turn back his

eyes towards the infernal caverns, loses at first sight all that influence which attracted him on high.'

Vos hæc fabula respicit,
Quicunque in superum diem
Mentem ducere quæritis.
Nam qui Tartareum in specus
Victus lumina flexerit,
Quidquid præcipuum trahit,
Perdit, dum videt inferos.

It may be observed, in general, that the future is purchased by the present. It is not possible to secure distant or permanent happiness but by the forbearance of some immediate gratification. This is so evidently true with regard to the whole of our existence, that all the precepts of theology have no other tendency than to enforce the life of faith; a life regulated not by our senses but our belief; a life in which pleasures are to be refused for fear of invisible punishments, and calamities sometimes to be sought, and always endured, in hope of rewards that shall be obtained in another state.

Even if we take into our view only that particle of our duration which is terminated by the grave, it will be found that we cannot enjoy one part of life beyond the common limitations of pleasure, but by anticipating some of the satisfaction which should exhilarate the following years. The heat of youth may spread happiness into wild luxuriance, but the radical vigour requisite to make it perennial is exhausted, and all that can be hoped afterwards is languor and sterility.

The reigning error of mankind is, that we are not content with the conditions on which the goods of life are granted. No man is insensible of the value of knowledge, the advantages of health, or the convenience of plenty, but every day shows us those on whom the conviction is without effect.

Knowledge is praised and desired by multitudes whom her charms could never rouse from the couch of sloth; whom the faintest invitation of pleasure draws away from their studies; to whom any other method of wearing out the day is more eligible than the use of books, and who are more easily engaged by any conversation, than such as may rectify their notions or enlarge their comprehension.

Every man that has felt pain, knows how little all other comforts can gladden him to whom health is denied. Yet who is there does not sometimes hazard it for the enjoyment of an hour? All assemblies of jollity, all places of public entertainment, exhibit examples of strength wasting in riot, and beauty withering in irregularity; nor is it easy to enter a house in which part of the family is not groaning in repentance of past intemperance, and part admitting disease by negligence, or soliciting it by luxury.

There is no pleasure which men of every age and sect have more generally agreed to mention with contempt, than the gratifications of the palate, an entertainment so far removed from intellectual happiness, that scarcely the most shameless of the sensual herd have dared to defend it: yet even to this, the lowest of our delights, to this, though neither quick nor lasting, is health with all its activity and sprightliness daily sacrificed; and for this are half the miseries endured which urge impatience to call on death.

The whole world is put in motion by the wish for riches, and the dread of poverty. Who, then, would not imagine that such conduct as will inevitably destroy what all are thus labouring to acquire, must generally be avoided? That he who spends more than he receives, must in time become indigent,

cannot be doubted; but how evident soever this consequence may appear, the spendthrift moves in the whirl of pleasure with too much rapidity to keep it before his eyes, and, in the intoxication of gayety, grows every day poorer without any such sense of approaching ruin as is sufficient to wake him into caution.

Many complaints are made of the misery of life; and, indeed, it must be confessed that we are subject to calamities by which the good and bad, the diligent and slothful, the vigilant and heedless, are equally afflicted. But surely, though some indulgence may be allowed to groans extorted by inevitable misery, no man has a right to repine at evils which, against warning, against experience, he deliberately and leisurely brings upon his own head; or to consider himself as debarred from happiness by such obstacles as resolution may break, or dexterity may put aside.

Great numbers who quarrel with their condition have wanted not the power but the will to obtain a better state. They have never contemplated the difference between good and evil sufficiently to quicken aversion or invigorate desire; they have indulged a drowsy thoughtlessness or giddy levity; have committed the balance of choice to the management of caprice; and when they have long accustomed themselves to receive all that chance offered them, without examination, lament at last that they find themselves deceived.

No. 179. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1751.

Perpetuo risu pulmonem agitare solebat.

JUV. SAT. X. 33.

Democritus would feed his spleen, and shake
His sides and shoulders till he felt them ache.

DRYDEN.

'EVERY man,' says Tully, 'has two characters; one, which he partakes with all mankind, and by which he is distinguished from brute animals; another, which discriminates him from the rest of his own species, and impresses on him a manner and temper peculiar to himself; this particular character, if it be not repugnant to the laws of general humanity, it is always his business to cultivate and preserve.'

Every hour furnishes some confirmation of Tully's precept. It seldom happens, that an assembly of pleasure is so happily selected, but that some one finds admission, with whom the rest are deservedly offended; and it will appear, on a close inspection, that scarce any man becomes eminently disagreeable but by a departure from his real character, and an attempt at something for which nature or education have left him unqualified.

Ignorance or dulness have, indeed, no power of affording delight, but they never give disgust except when they assume the dignity of knowledge, or ape the sprightliness of wit. Awkwardness and inelegance have none of those attractions by which ease and politeness take possession of the heart; but

ridicule and censure seldom rise against them, unless they appear associated with that confidence which belongs only to long acquaintance with the modes of life, and to consciousness of unfailing propriety of behaviour. Deformity itself is regarded with tenderness rather than aversion, when it does not attempt to deceive the sight by dress and decoration, and to seize, upon fictitious claims, the prerogatives of beauty.

He that stands to contemplate the crowds that fill the streets of a populous city, will see many passengers whose air and motion it will be difficult to behold without contempt and laughter; but if he examines what are the appearances that thus powerfully excite his risibility, he will find among them neither poverty nor disease, nor any involuntary or painful defect. The disposition to derision and insult is awakened by the softness of foppery, the swell of insolence, the liveliness of levity, or the solemnity of grandeur; by the sprightly trip, the stately stalk, the formal strut, and the lofty mien; by gestures intended to catch the eye, and by looks elaborately formed as evidences of importance.

It has, I think, been sometimes urged in favour of affectation, that it is only a mistake of the means to a good end, and that the intention with which it is practised is always to please. If all attempts to innovate the constitutional or habitual character have really proceeded from public spirit and love of others, the world has hitherto been sufficiently ungrateful, since no return but scorn has yet been made to the most difficult of all enterprises, a contest with nature; nor has any pity been shown to the fatigues of labour which never succeeded, and the uneasiness of disguise, by which nothing was concealed.

It seems, therefore, to be determined by the general suffrage of mankind, that he who decks himself in adscititious qualities, rather purposes to command applause than impart pleasure; and he is, therefore, treated as a man who, by an unreasonable ambition, usurps the place in society to which he has no right. Praise is seldom paid with willingness even to incontestable merit, and it can be no wonder that he who calls for it without desert is repulsed with universal indignation.

Affectation naturally counterfeits those excellences which are placed at the greatest distance from possibility of attainment. We are conscious of our own defects, and eagerly endeavour to supply them by artificial excellence; nor would such efforts be wholly without excuse, were they not often excited by ornamental trifles, which he, that thus anxiously struggles for the reputation of possessing them, would not have been known to want, had not his industry quickened observation.

Gelasimus passed the first part of his life in academical privacy, and rural retirement, without any other conversation than that of scholars, grave, studious, and abstracted as himself. He cultivated the mathematical sciences with indefatigable diligence, discovered many useful theorems, discussed with great accuracy the resistance of fluids, and, though his priority was not generally acknowledged, was the first who fully explained all the properties of the catenarian curve.

Learning, when it rises to eminence, will be observed in time, whatever mists may happen to surround it. Gelasimus, in his forty-ninth year, was distinguished by those who have the rewards of knowledge in their hands, and called out to display his acquisitions for the honour of his country, and

add dignity by his presence to philosophical assemblies. As he did not suspect his unfitness for common affairs, he felt no reluctance to obey the invitation, and what he did not feel he had yet too much honesty to feign. He entered into the world as a larger and more populous college, where his performances would be more public, and his renown further extended; and imagined that he should find his reputation universally prevalent, and the influence of learning everywhere the same.

His merit introduced him to splendid tables and elegant acquaintance; but he did not find himself always qualified to join in the conversation. He was distressed by civilities, which he knew not how to repay, and entangled in many ceremonial perplexities, from which his books and diagrams could not extricate him. He was sometimes unluckily engaged in disputes with ladies, with whom algebraic axioms had no great weight, and saw many whose favour and esteem he could not but desire, to whom he was very little recommended by his theories of the tides, or his approximations to the quadrature of the circle.

Gelasimus did not want penetration to discover, that no charm was more generally irresistible than that of easy facetiousness and flowing hilarity. He saw that diversion was more frequently welcome than improvement, that authority and seriousness were rather feared than loved, and that the grave scholar was a kind of imperious ally, hastily dismissed when his assistance was no longer necessary. He came to a sudden resolution of throwing off those cumbrous ornaments of learning, which hindered his reception, and commenced a man of wit and jocularity. Utterly unacquainted with every topic of merriment, ignorant of the modes and follies, the vices

and virtues of mankind, and unfurnished with any ideas but such as Pappus and Archimedes had given him, he began to silence all inquiries with a jest instead of a solution, extended his face with a grin, which he mistook for a smile, and in the place of a scientific discourse, retailed in a new language, formed between the college and the tavern, the intelligence of the newspaper.

Laughter, he knew, was a token of alacrity; and, therefore, whatever he said or heard, he was careful not to fail in that great duty of a wit. If he asked or told the hour of the day, if he complained of heat or cold, stirred the fire, or filled the glass, removed his chair, or snuffed the candle, he always found some occasion to laugh. The jest was, indeed, a secret to all but himself; but habitual confidence in his own discernment hindered him from suspecting any weakness or mistake. He wondered that his wit was so little understood, but expected that his audience would comprehend it by degrees, and persisted all his life to show, by gross buffoonery, how little the strongest faculties can perform beyond the limits of their own province.

No. 180. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1751.

Ταῦτ' εἰδὼς σοφὸς ἴσθι μάτην δ' Ἐπίκουρον ἔασον
Ποῦ τὸ κενὸν ζητεῖν, καὶ τίνες αἱ μονάδες.

AUTOMEDON.

On life, on morals, be thy thoughts employ'd;
Leave to the schools their atoms and their void.

It is somewhere related by Le Clerc, that a wealthy trader of good understanding, having the common ambition to breed his son a scholar, carried him to an university, resolving to use his own judgment in the choice of a tutor. He had been taught, by whatever intelligence, the nearest way to the heart of an academic, and at his arrival entertained all who came about him with such profusion, that the professors were lured by the smell of his table from their books, and flocked round him with all the cringes of awkward complaisance. This eagerness answered the merchant's purpose; he glutted them with delicacies, and softened them with caresses, till he prevailed upon one after another to open his bosom, and make a discovery of his competitions, jealousies, and resentments. Having thus learned each man's character, partly from himself, and partly from his acquaintances, he resolved to find some other education for his son, and went away convinced, that a scholastic life has no other tendency than to vitiate the morals, and contract the understanding: nor would he afterwards hear with

patience the praises of the ancient authors, being persuaded that scholars of all ages must have been the same, and that Xenophon and Cicero were professors of some former university, and, therefore, mean and selfish, ignorant and servile, like those whom he had lately visited and forsaken.

Envy, curiosity, and a sense of the imperfection of our present state, incline us to estimate the advantages which are in the possession of others, above their real value. Every one must have remarked, what powers and prerogatives the vulgar imagine to be conferred by learning. A man of science is expected to excel the unlettered and unenlightened, even on occasions where literature is of no use, and among weak minds, loses part of his reverence, by discovering no superiority in those parts of life, in which all are unavoidably equal; as when a monarch makes a progress to the remoter provinces, the rustics are said sometimes to wonder that they find him of the same size with themselves.

These demands of prejudice and folly can never be satisfied; and, therefore, many of the imputations which learning suffers from disappointed ignorance, are without reproach. But there are some failures to which men of study are peculiarly exposed. Every condition has its disadvantages. The circle of knowledge is too wide for the most active and diligent intellect, and while science is pursued, other accomplishments are neglected; as a small garrison must leave one part of an extensive fortress naked, when an alarm calls them to another.

The learned, however, might generally support their dignity with more success, if they suffered not themselves to be misled by the desire of superfluous attainments. Raphael, in return to Adam's inquiries into the courses of the stars and the revolutions

of heaven, counsels him to withdraw his mind from idle speculations, and employ his faculties upon nearer and more interesting objects, the survey of his own life, the subjection of his passions, the knowledge of duties which must daily be performed, and the detection of dangers which must daily be incurred.

This angelic counsel every man of letters should always have before him. He that devotes himself to retired study, naturally sinks from omission to forgetfulness of social duties; he must be, therefore, sometimes awakened, and recalled to the general condition of mankind.

I am far from any intention to limit curiosity, or confine the labours of learning to arts of immediate and necessary use. It is only from the various essays of experimental industry, and the vague excursions of minds set upon discovery, that any advancement of knowledge can be expected; and though many must be disappointed in their labours, yet they are not to be charged with having spent their time in vain; their example contributed to inspire emulation, and their miscarriages taught others the way to success.

But the distant hope of being one day useful or eminent, ought not to mislead us too far from that study, which is equally requisite to the great and mean, to the celebrated and obscure; the art of moderating the desires, of repressing the appetites; and of conciliating or retaining the favour of mankind.

No man can imagine the course of his own life, or the conduct of the world around him, unworthy his attention; yet among the sons of learning many seem to have thought of every thing rather than of themselves, and to have observed every thing but

what passes before their eyes: many who toil through the intricacy of complicated systems, are insuperably embarrassed with the least perplexity in common affairs; many who compare the actions, and ascertain the characters of ancient heroes, let their own days glide away without examination, and suffer vicious habits to encroach upon their minds without resistance or detection.

The most frequent reproach of the scholastic race is the want of fortitude, not martial but philosophic. Men bred in shades and silence, taught to immure themselves at sunset, and accustomed to no other weapon than syllogism, may be allowed to feel terror at personal danger, and to be disconcerted by tumult and alarm. But why should he whose life is spent in contemplation, and whose business is only to discover truth, be unable to rectify the fallacies of imagination, or contend successfully against prejudice and passion? To what end has he read and meditated, if he gives up his understanding to false appearances, and suffers himself to be enslaved by fear of evils to which only folly or vanity can expose him, or elated by advantages to which, as they are equally conferred upon the good and bad, no real dignity is annexed?

Such, however, is the state of the world, that the most obsequious of the slaves of pride, the most rapturous of the gazers upon wealth, the most officious of the whisperers of greatness, are collected from seminaries appropriated to the study of wisdom and of virtue, where it was intended that appetite should learn to be content with little, and that hope should aspire only to honours which no human power can give or take away.

The student, when he comes forth into the world, instead of congratulating himself upon his exemp-

tion from the errors of those whose opinions have been formed by accident or custom, and who live without any certain principles of conduct, is commonly in haste to mingle with the multitude, and show his sprightliness and ductility by an expeditious compliance with fashions or vices. The first smile of a man, whose fortune gives him power to reward his dependents, commonly enchants him beyond resistance; the glare of equipage, the sweets of luxury, the liberality of general promises, the softness of habitual affability, fill his imagination; and he soon ceases to have any other wish than to be well received, or any measure of right and wrong but the opinion of his patron.

A man flattered and obeyed, learns to exact grosser adulation, and enjoin lower submission. Neither our virtues nor vices are all our own. If there were no cowardice, there would be little insolence; pride cannot rise to any great degree, but by the concurrence of blandishment or the sufferance of tameness. The wretch who would shrink and crouch before one that should dart his eyes upon him with the spirit of natural equality, becomes capricious and tyrannical when he sees himself approached with a downcast look, and hears the soft address of awe and servility. To those who are willing to purchase favour by cringes and compliance, is to be imputed the haughtiness that leaves nothing to be hoped by firmness and integrity.

If, instead of wandering after the meteors of philosophy, which fill the world with splendour for a while, and then sink and are forgotten, the candidates of learning fixed their eyes upon the permanent lustre of moral and religious truth, they would find a more certain direction to happiness. A little plausibility of discourse, and acquaintance

with unnecessary speculations, is dearly purchased, when it excludes those instructions which fortify the heart with resolution, and exalt the spirit to independence.

No. 181. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1751.

—Neu fluitem dubiæ spe pendulus horæ.
HOR. EPIST. i. 18. 110.

Nor let me float in fortune's power,
Dependent on the future hour. FRANCIS.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

"As I have passed much of my life in disquiet and suspense, and lost many opportunities of advantage by a passion which I have reason to believe prevalent in different degrees over a great part of mankind, I cannot but think myself well qualified to warn those who are yet uncaptivated, of the danger which they incur by placing themselves within its influence.

"I served an apprenticeship to a linen-draper, with uncommon reputation for diligence and fidelity; and at the age of three-and-twenty opened a shop for myself, with a large stock, and such credit among all the merchants, who were acquainted with my master, that I could command whatever was imported curious or valuable. For five years I proceeded with success proportionate to close applica-

tion and untainted integrity; was a daring bidder at every sale; always paid my notes before they were due; and advanced so fast in commercial reputation, that I was proverbially marked out as the model of young traders, and every one expected that a few years would make me an alderman.

"In this course of even prosperity, I was one day persuaded to buy a ticket in the lottery. The sum was inconsiderable, part was to be repaid though fortune might fail to favour me, and, therefore, my established maxims of frugality did not restrain me from so trifling an experiment. The ticket lay almost forgotten till the time at which every man's fate was to be determined; nor did the affair even then seem of any importance, till I discovered by the public papers that the number next to mine had conferred the great prize.

"My heart leaped at the thought of such an approach to sudden riches, which I considered myself, however contrarily to the laws of computation, as having missed by a single chance; and I could not forbear to revolve the consequences which such a bounteous allotment would have produced, if it had happened to me. This dream of felicity, by degrees, took possession of my imagination. The great delight of my solitary hours was to purchase an estate, and form plantations with money which once might have been mine, and I never met my friends but I spoiled all their merriment by perpetual complaints of my ill luck.

"At length another lottery was opened, and I had now so heated my imagination with the prospect of a prize, that I should have pressed among the first purchasers, had not my ardour been withheld by deliberation upon the probability of success from one ticket rather than another. I hesitated long between

even and odd; considered the square and cubic numbers through the lottery; examined all those to which good luck had been hitherto annexed; and at last fixed upon one, which, by some secret relation to the events of my life, I thought predestined to make me happy. Delay in great affairs is often mischievous; the ticket was sold, and its possessor could not be found.

"I returned to my conjectures, and after many arts of prognostication, fixed upon another chance, but with less confidence. Never did captive, heir, or lover, feel so much vexation from the slow pace of time, as I suffered between the purchase of my ticket and the distribution of the prizes. I solaced my uneasiness as well as I could, by frequent contemplations of approaching happiness; when the sun rose I knew it would set, and congratulated myself at night that I was so much nearer to my wishes. At last the day came, my ticket appeared, and rewarded all my care and sagacity with a despicable prize of fifty pounds.

"My friends, who honestly rejoiced upon my success, were very coldly received; I hid myself a fortnight in the country, that my chagrin might fume away without observation, and then returning to my shop, began to listen after another lottery.

"With the news of a lottery I was soon gratified, and having now found the vanity of conjecture and inefficacy of computation, I resolved to take the prize by violence, and, therefore, bought forty tickets, not omitting, however, to divide them between the even and odd numbers, that I might not miss the lucky class. Many conclusions did I form, and many experiments did I try to determine from which of those tickets I might most reasonably expect riches. At last, being unable to satisfy myself

by any modes of reasoning, I wrote the numbers upon dice, and allotted five hours every day to the amusement of throwing them in a garret; and examining the event by an exact register, found, on the evening before the lottery was drawn, that one of my numbers had been turned up five times more than any of the rest in three hundred and thirty thousand throws.

"This experiment was fallacious; the first day presented the hopeful ticket, a detestable blank. The rest came out with different fortune, and in conclusion I lost thirty pounds by this great adventure.

"I had now wholly changed the cast of my behaviour and the conduct of my life. The shop was for the most part abandoned to my servants, and if I entered it, my thoughts were so engrossed by my tickets, that I scarcely heard or answered a question, but considered every customer as an intruder upon my meditations, whom I was in haste to dispatch. I mistook the price of my goods, committed blunders in my bills, forgot to file my receipts, and neglected to regulate my books. My acquaintances, by degrees, began to fall away; but I perceived the decline of my business with little emotion, because whatever deficiency there might be in my gains I expected the next lottery to supply.

"Miscarriage naturally produces diffidence; I began now to seek assistance against ill luck, by an alliance with those that had been more successful. I inquired diligently at what office any prize had been sold, that I might purchase of a propitious vender; solicited those who had been fortunate in former lotteries, to partake with me in my new tickets; and whenever I met with one that had in any event of his life been eminently prosperous, I

invited him to take a larger share. I had, by this rule of conduct, so diffused my interest, that I had a fourth part of fifteen tickets, an eighth of forty, and a sixteenth of ninety.

"I waited for the decision of my fate with my former palpitations, and looked upon the business of my trade with the usual neglect. The wheel at last was turned, and its revolutions brought me a long succession of sorrows and disappointments. I, indeed, often partook of a small prize, and the loss of one day was generally balanced by the gain of the next; but my desires yet remained unsatisfied, and when one of my chances had failed, all my expectation was suspended on those which remained yet undetermined. At last, a prize of five thousand pounds was proclaimed; I caught fire at the cry, and inquiring the number, found it to be one of my own tickets, which I had divided among those on whose luck I depended, and of which I had retained only a sixteenth part.

"You will easily judge with what detestation of himself, a man thus intent upon gain reflected that he had sold a prize which was once in his possession. It was to no purpose that I represented to my mind the impossibility of recalling the past, or the folly of condemning an act, which only its event, an event which no human intelligence could foresee, proved to be wrong. The prize which, though put in my hands, had been suffered to slip from me, filled me with anguish; and knowing that complaint would only expose me to ridicule, I gave myself up silently to grief, and lost, by degrees, my appetite and my rest.

"My indisposition soon became visible; I was visited by my friends, and among them by Eumathes, a clergyman, whose piety and learning gave

him such an ascendant over me, that I could not refuse to open my heart. There are, said he, few minds sufficiently firm to be trusted in the hands of chance. Whoever finds himself inclined to anticipate futurity, and exalt possibility to certainty, should avoid every kind of casual adventure, since his grief must be always proportionate to his hope. You have long wasted that time, which, by a proper application, would have certainly, though moderately, increased your fortune, in a laborious and anxious pursuit of a species of gain, which no labour or anxiety, no art or expedient, can secure or promote. You are now fretting away your life in repentance of an act, against which repentance can give no caution, but to avoid the occasion of committing it. Rouse from this lazy dream of fortuitous riches, which if obtained, you could scarcely have enjoyed, because they could confer no consciousness of desert; return to rational and manly industry, and consider the mere gift of luck as below the care of a wise man."

No. 182. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1751.

—Dives qui fieri vult,
Et citò vult fieri. JUV. SAT. xiv. 176.

The lust of wealth can never bear delay.

It has been observed in a late paper, that we are unreasonably desirous to separate the goods

of life from those evils which Providence has connected with them, and to catch advantages without paying the price at which they were offered us. Every man wishes to be rich, but very few have the powers necessary to raise a sudden fortune, either by new discoveries, or by superiority of skill in any necessary employment; and among lower understandings many want the firmness and industry requisite to regular gain and gradual acquisitions.

From the hope of enjoying affluence by methods more compendious than those of labour, and more generally practicable than those of genius, proceeds the common inclination to experiment and hazard, and that willingness to snatch all opportunities of growing rich by chance, which, when it has once taken possession of the mind, is seldom driven out either by time or argument, but continues to waste life in perpetual delusion, and generally ends in wretchedness and want.

The folly of untimely exultation and visionary prosperity, is by no means peculiar to the purchasers of tickets; there are multitudes whose life is nothing but a continual lottery; who are always within a few months of plenty and happiness, and how often soever they are mocked with blanks, expect a prize from the next adventure.

Among the most resolute and ardent of the votaries of chance, may be numbered the mortals whose hope is to raise themselves by a wealthy match; who lay out all their industry on the assiduities of courtship, and sleep and wake with no other ideas than of treats, compliments, guardians, and rivals.

One of the most indefatigable of this class, is my old friend Leviculus, whom I have never known for

thirty years without some matrimonial project of advantage. Leviculus was bred under a merchant, and by the graces of his person, the sprightliness of his prattle, and the neatness of his dress, so much enamoured his master's second daughter, a girl of sixteen, that she declared her resolution to have no other husband. Her father, after having chidden her for undutifulness, consented to the match, not much to the satisfaction of Leviculus, who was sufficiently elated with his conquest to think himself entitled to a larger fortune. He was, however, soon rid of his perplexity, for his mistress died before their marriage.

He was now so well satisfied with his own accomplishments, that he determined to commence fortune-hunter; and when his apprenticeship expired, instead of beginning, as was expected, to walk the exchange with a face of importance, or associating himself with those who were most eminent for their knowledge of the stocks, he at once threw off the solemnity of the counting-house, equipped himself with a modish wig, listened to wits in coffee-houses, passed his evenings behind the scenes in the theatres, learned the names of beauties of quality, hummed the last stanzas of fashionable songs, talked familiarly of high play, boasted of his achievements upon drawers and coachmen, was often brought to his lodgings at midnight in a chair, told with negligence and jocularity of bilking a tailor, and now and then let fly a shrewd jest at a sober citizen.

Thus furnished with irresistible artillery, he turned his batteries upon the female world, and in the first warmth of self-approbation, proposed no less than the possession of riches and beauty united. He, therefore, paid his civilities to Flavilla, the only daughter of a wealthy shopkeeper, who not being

accustomed to amorous blandishments or respectful addresses, was delighted with the novelty of love, and easily suffered him to conduct her to the play, and to meet her where she visited. Leviculus did not doubt but her father, however offended by a clandestine marriage, would soon be reconciled by the tears of his daughter and the merit of his son-in-law, and was in haste to conclude the affair. But the lady liked better to be courted than married, and kept him three years in uncertainty and attendance. At last she fell in love with a young ensign at a ball, and having danced with him all night, married him in the morning.

Leviculus, to avoid the ridicule of his companions, took a journey to a small estate in the country, where, after his usual inquiries concerning the nymphs in the neighbourhood, he found it proper to fall in love with Altilia, a maiden lady, twenty years older than himself, for whose favour fifteen nephews and nieces were in perpetual contention. They hovered round her with such jealous officiousness, as scarcely left a moment vacant for a lover. Leviculus, nevertheless, discovered his passion in a letter, and Altilia could not withstand the pleasure of hearing vows and sighs, and flatteries and protestations. She admitted his visits, enjoyed, for five years, the happiness of keeping all her expectants in perpetual alarms, and amused herself with the various stratagems which were practised to disengage her affections. Sometimes she was advised, with great earnestness, to travel for her health, and sometimes entreated to keep her brother's house. Many stories were spread to the disadvantage of Leviculus, by which she commonly seemed affected for a time, but took care, soon afterwards, to express her conviction of their falsehood. But being at last satiated with this

ludicrous tyranny, she told her lover, when he pressed for the reward of his services, that she was very sensible of his merit, but was resolved not to impoverish an ancient family.

He then returned to the town, and soon after his arrival became acquainted with Latronia, a lady distinguished by the elegance of her equipage and the regularity of her conduct. Her wealth was evident in her magnificence, and her prudence in her economy; and, therefore, Leviculus, who had scarcely confidence to solicit her favour, readily acquitted fortune of her former debts, when he found himself distinguished by her with such marks of preference as a woman of modesty is allowed to give. He now grew bolder, and ventured to breathe out his impatience before her. She heard him without resentment, in time permitted him to hope for happiness, and at last fixed the nuptial day, without any distrustful reserve of pin-money, or sordid stipulations for jointure and settlements.

Leviculus was triumphing on the eve of marriage, when he heard on the stairs the voice of Latronia's maid, whom frequent bribes had secured in his service. She soon burst into his room, and told him that she could not suffer him to be longer deceived; that her mistress was now spending the last payment of her fortune, and was only supported in her expense by the credit of his estate. Leviculus shuddered to see himself so near a precipice, and found that he was indebted for his escape to the resentment of the maid, who, having assisted Latronia to gain the conquest, quarrelled with her at last about the plunder.

Leviculus was now hopeless and disconsolate, till one Sunday he saw a lady in the Mall, whom her dress declared a widow, and whom, by the jolting

prance of her gait, and the broad resplendence of her countenance, he guessed to have lately buried some prosperous citizen. He followed her home, and found her to be no less than the relict of Prune, the grocer, who having no children, had bequeathed to her all his debts and dues, and his estates real and personal. No formality was necessary in addressing Madam Prune, and, therefore, Leviculus went next morning without an introductor. His declaration was received with a loud laugh; she then collected her countenance, wondered at his impudence, asked if he knew to whom he was talking, then showed him the door, and again laughed to find him confused. Leviculus discovered that this coarseness was nothing more than the coquetry of Cornhill, and next day returned to the attack. He soon grew familiar to her dialect, and in a few weeks heard, without any emotion, hints of gay clothes with empty pockets; concurred in many sage remarks on the regard due to people of property; and agreed with her in detestation of the ladies at the other end of the town, who pinched their bellies to buy fine laces, and then pretented to laugh at the city.

He sometimes presumed to mention marriage; but was always answered with a slap, a hoot, and a flounce. At last he began to press her closer, and thought himself more favourably received; but going one morning, with a resolution to trifle no longer, he found her gone to church with a young journeyman from the neighbouring shop, of whom she had become enamoured at her window.

In these, and a thousand intermediate adventures, has Leviculus spent his time, till he is now grown gray with age, fatigue, and disappointment. He begins at last to find that success is not to be expected, and being unfit for any employment that

might improve his fortune, and unfurnished with any arts that might amuse his leisure, is condemned to wear out a tasteless life in narratives which few will hear, and complaints which none will pity.

No. 183. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1751.

Nulla fides regni sociis, omnisque potestas
Impatiens consortis erat.— LUCAN.

No faith of partnership dominion owns;
Still discord hovers o'er divided thrones.

The hostility perpetually exercised between one man and another, is caused by the desire of many for that which only few can possess. Every man would be rich, powerful, and famous; yet fame, power, and riches, are only the names of relative conditions, which imply the obscurity, dependence, and poverty of greater numbers.

This universal and incessant competition produces injury and malice by two motives, interest and envy; the prospect of adding to our possessions what we can take from others, and the hope of alleviating the sense of our disparity by lessening others, though we gain nothing to ourselves.

Of these two malignant and destructive powers, it seems probable, at the first view, that interest has the strongest and most extensive influence. It is easy to conceive that opportunities to seize what has

been long wanted may excite desires almost irresistible; but surely, the same eagerness cannot be kindled by an accidental power of destroying that which gives happiness to another. It must be more natural to rob for gain, than to ravage only for mischief.

Yet I am inclined to believe that the great law of mutual benevolence is oftener violated by envy than by interest, and that most of the misery which the defamation of blameless actions, or the obstruction of honest endeavours, brings upon the world, is inflicted by men that propose no advantage to themselves but the satisfaction of poisoning the banquet which they cannot taste, and blasting the harvest which they have no right to reap.

Interest can diffuse itself but to a narrow compass. The number is never large of those who can hope to fill the posts of degraded power, catch the fragments of shattered fortune, or succeed to the honours of depreciated beauty. But the empire of envy has no limits, as it requires to its influence very little help from external circumstances. Envy may always be produced by idleness and pride, and in what place will they not be found?

Interest requires some qualities not universally bestowed. The ruin of another will produce no profit to him who has not discernment to mark his advantage, courage to seize, and activity to pursue it; but the cold malignity of envy may be exerted in a torpid and quiescent state, amidst the gloom of stupidity, in the coverts of cowardice. He that falls by the attacks of interest, is torn by hungry tigers; he may discover and resist his enemies. He that perishes in the ambushes of envy, is destroyed by unknown and invisible assailants, and dies like a man suffocated by a poisonous vapour,

without knowledge of his danger, or possibility of contest.

Interest is seldom pursued but at some hazard. He that hopes to gain much, has commonly something to lose, and when he ventures to attack superiority, if he fails to conquer, is irrecoverably crushed. But envy may act without expense or danger. To spread suspicion, to invent calumnies, to propagate scandal, requires neither labour nor courage. It is easy for the author of a lie, however malignant, to escape detection, and infamy needs very little industry to assist its circulation.

Envy is almost the only vice which is practicable at all times, and in every place; the only passion which can never lie quiet for want of irritation: its effects, therefore, are everywhere discoverable, and its attempts always to be dreaded.

It is impossible to mention a name which any advantageous distinction has made eminent, but some latent animosity will burst out. The wealthy trader, however he may abstract himself from public affairs, will never want those who hint, with Shylock, that ships are but boards. The beauty, adorned only with the unambitious graces of innocence and modesty, provokes, whenever she appears, a thousand murmurs of detraction. The genius, even when he endeavours only to entertain or instruct, yet suffers persecution from innumerable critics, whose acrimony is excited merely by the pain of seeing others pleased, and of hearing applauses which another enjoys.

The frequency of envy makes it so familiar, that it escapes our notice; nor do we often reflect upon its turpitude or malignity, till we happen to feel its influence. When he that has given no provocation to malice, but by attempting to excel, finds himself

pursued by multitudes whom he never saw, with all the implacability of personal resentment; when he perceives clamour and malice let loose upon him as a public enemy, and incited by every stratagem of defamation; when he hears the misfortunes of his family, or the follies of his youth, exposed to the world; and every failure of conduct, or defect of nature, aggravated and ridiculed; he then learns to abhor those artifices at which he only laughed before, and discovers how much the happiness of life would be advanced by the eradication of envy from the human heart.

Envy is, indeed, a stubborn weed of the mind, and seldom yields to the culture of philosophy. There are, however, considerations, which, if carefully implanted and diligently propagated, might in time overpower and repress it, since no one can nurse it for the sake of pleasure, as its effects are only shame, anguish, and perturbation.

It is above all other vices inconsistent with the character of a social being, because it sacrifices truth and kindness to very weak temptations. He that plunders a wealthy neighbour gains as much as he takes away, and may improve his own condition in the same proportion as he impairs another's; but he that blasts a flourishing reputation, must be content with a small dividend of additional fame, so small as can afford very little consolation to balance the guilt by which it is obtained.

I have hitherto avoided that dangerous and empirical morality, which cures one vice by means of another. But envy is so base and detestable, so vile in its original, and so pernicious in its effects, that the predominance of almost any other quality is to be preferred. It is one of those lawless enemies of society, against which poisoned arrows may

honestly be used. Let it therefore be constantly remembered, that whoever envies another confesses his superiority, and let those be reformed by their pride who have lost their virtue.

It is no slight aggravation of the injuries which envy incites, that they are committed against those who have given no intentional provocation; and that the sufferer is often marked out for ruin, not because he has failed in any duty, but because he has dared to do more than was required.

Almost every other crime is practised by the help of some quality which might have produced esteem or love, if it had been well employed; but envy is mere unmixed and genuine evil; it pursues a hateful end by despicable means, and desires not so much its own happiness as another's misery. To avoid depravity like this, it is not necessary that any one should aspire to heroism or sanctity, but only that he should resolve not to quit the rank which nature assigns him, and wish to maintain the dignity of a human being.

No. 184. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1751.

Permittes ipsis expendere numinibus, quid
Conveniat nobis, rebusque sit utile nostris.

JUV. SAT. X. 347.

Intrust thy fortune to the powers above;
Leave them to manage for thee, and to grant
What their unerring wisdom sees thee want.

DRYDEN.

As every scheme of life, so every form of writing, has its advantages and inconveniences, though not mingled in the same proportions. The writer of essays escapes many embarrassments to which a large work would have exposed him; he seldom harasses his reason with long trains of consequences, dims his eyes with the perusal of antiquated volumes, or burdens his memory with great accumulations of preparatory knowledge. A careless glance upon a favourite author, or transient survey of the varieties of life, is sufficient to supply the first hint or seminal idea, which, enlarged by the gradual accretion of matter stored in the mind, is by the warmth of fancy easily expanded into flowers, and sometimes ripened into fruit.

The most frequent difficulty by which the authors of these petty compositions are distressed, arises from the perpetual demand of novelty and change. The compiler of a system of science lays his invention at rest, and employs only his judgment, the faculty exerted with least fatigue. Even the relator of feigned adventures, when once the principal

characters are established, and the great events regularly connected, finds incidents and episodes crowding upon his mind; every change opens new views, and the latter part of the story grows without labour out of the former. But he that attempts to entertain his reader with unconnected pieces, finds the irksomeness of his task rather increased than lessened by every production. The day calls afresh upon him for a new topic, and he is again obliged to choose, without any principle to regulate his choice.

It is, indeed, true, that there is seldom any necessity of looking far, or inquiring long, for a proper subject. Every diversity of art or nature, every public blessing or calamity, every domestic pain or gratification, every sally of caprice, blunder of absurdity, or stratagem of affectation, may supply matter to him whose only rule is to avoid uniformity. But it often happens, that the judgment is distracted with boundless multiplicity, the imagination ranges from one design to another, and the hours pass imperceptibly away, till the composition can be no longer delayed, and necessity enforces the use of those thoughts which then happen to be at hand. The mind, rejoicing at deliverance on any terms from perplexity and suspense, applies herself vigourously to the work before her, collects embellishments and illustrations, and sometimes finishes, with great elegance and happiness, what in a state of ease and leisure she never had begun.

It is not commonly observed, how much, even of actions considered as particularly subject to choice, is to be attributed to accident, or some cause out of our own power, by whatever name it be distinguished. To close tedious deliberations with hasty resolves, and after long consultations with reason to refer the question to caprice, is by no means peculiar to the

essayist. Let him that peruses this paper review the series of his life, and inquire how he was placed in his present condition. He will find that of the good or ill which he has experienced, a great part came unexpected, without any visible gradations of approach; that every event has been influenced by causes acting without his intervention; and that whenever he pretended to the prerogative of foresight, he was mortified with new conviction of the shortness of his views.

The busy, the ambitious, the inconstant, and the adventurous, may be said to throw themselves by design into the arms of fortune, and voluntarily to quit the power of governing themselves; they engage in a course of life in which little can be ascertained by previous measures; nor is it any wonder that their time is past between elation and despondency, hope and disappointment.

Some there are who appear to walk the road of life with more circumspection, and make no step till they think themselves secure from the hazard of a precipice; when neither pleasure nor profit can tempt them from the beaten path; who refuse to climb lest they should fall, or to run lest they should stumble, and move slowly forward without any compliance with those passions by which the heady and vehement are seduced and betrayed.

Yet even the timorous prudence of this judicious class is far from exempting them from the dominion of chance, a subtle and insidious power, who will intrude upon privacy and embarrass caution. No course of life is so prescribed and limited, but that many actions must result from arbitrary election. Every one must form the general plan of his conduct by his own reflections; he must resolve whether he will endeavour at riches or at content; whether

he will exercise private or public virtues; whether he will labour for the general benefit of mankind, or contract his beneficence to his family and dependents.

This question has long exercised the schools of philosophy, but remains yet undecided; and what hope is there that a young man, unacquainted with the arguments on either side, should determine his own destiny otherwise than by chance?

When chance has given him a partner of his bed, whom he prefers to all other women, without any proof of superior desert, chance must again direct him in the education of his children; for, who was ever able to convince himself by arguments, that he had chosen for his son that mode of instruction to which his understanding was best adapted, or by which he would most easily be made wise or virtuous?

Whoever shall inquire by what motives he was determined on these important occasions, will find them such as his pride will scarcely suffer him to confess; some sudden ardour of desire, some uncertain glimpse of advantage, some petty competition, some inaccurate conclusion, or some example implicitly reverenced. Such are often the first causes of our resolves; for it is necessary to act, but impossible to know the consequences of action, or to discuss all the reasons which offer themselves on every part to inquisitiveness and solicitude.

Since life itself is uncertain, nothing which has life for its basis can boast much stability. Yet this is but a small part of our perplexity. We set out on a tempestuous sea in quest of some port, where we expect to find rest, but where we are not sure of admission; we are not only in danger of sinking in the way, but of being misled by meteors mistaken

for stars, of being driven from our course by the changes of the wind, and of losing it by unskilful steerage: yet it sometimes happens, that cross winds blow us to a safer coast, that meteors draw us aside from whirlpools, and that negligence or error contributes to our escape from mischiefs, to which a direct course would have exposed us. Of those that, by precipitate conclusions, involve themselves in calamities without guilt, very few, however they may reproach themselves, can be certain that other measures would have been more successful.

In this state of universal uncertainty, where a thousand dangers hover about us, and none can tell whether the good that he pursues is not evil in disguise, or whether the next step will lead him to safety or destruction, nothing can afford any rational tranquillity, but the conviction that, however we amuse ourselves with unideal sounds, nothing in reality is governed by chance, but that the universe is under the perpetual superintendence of Him who created it: that our being is in the hands of omnipotent goodness, by whom what appears casual to us, is directed for ends ultimately kind and merciful: and that nothing can finally hurt him who debars not himself from the divine favour.

No. 185. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1751.

At vindicta bonum vitâ jucundius ipsâ,
Nempe hoc indocti.—
Chrysippus non dicit idem, nec mite Thaletis
Ingenium, dulcique senex vicinus Hymetto,
Qui partem acceptæ sæva inter vincla cicutæ
Accusatori nollet dare.—— Quippe minuti
Semper et infirmi est animi, exiguique voluptas
Ultio.— JUV. SAT. xiii. 180.

But O! revenge is sweet,
Thus think the crowd; who, eager to engage,
Take quickly fire, and kindle into rage.
Not so mild Thales nor Chrysippus thought,
Nor that good man, who drank the poisonous draught
With mind serene; and could not wish to see
His vile accuser drink as deep as he:
Exalted Socrates! divinely brave!
Injured he fell, and dying he forgave,
Too noble for revenge; which still we find
The weakest frailty of a feeble mind. DRYDEN.

No vicious dispositions of the mind more obstinately resist both the counsels of philosophy and the injunctions of religion, than those which are complicated with an opinion of dignity; and which we cannot dismiss without leaving in the hands of opposition some advantage iniquitously obtained, or suffering from our own prejudices some imputation of pusillanimity.

For this reason scarcely any law of our Redeemer is more openly transgressed, or more industriously evaded, than that by which he commands his followers to forgive injuries; and prohibits, under the sanction of eternal misery, the gratification of the

desire which every man feels to return pain upon him that inflicts it. Many who could have conquered their anger are unable to combat pride, and pursue offences to extremity of vengeance, lest they should be insulted by the triumph of an enemy.

But certainly no precept could better become him, at whose birth peace was proclaimed to the earth. For, what would so soon destroy all the order of society, and deform life with violence and ravage, as a permission to every one to judge his own cause, and to apportion his own recompense for imagined injuries?

It is difficult for a man of the strictest justice not to favour himself too much, in the calmest moments of solitary meditation. Every one wishes for the distinctions for which thousands are wishing at the same time, in their own opinion, with better claims. He that, when his reason operates in its full force, can thus, by the mere prevalence of self-love, prefer himself to his fellow-beings, is very unlikely to judge equitably when his passions are agitated by a sense of wrong, and his attention wholly engrossed by pain, interest, or danger. Whoever arrogates to himself the right of vengeance, shows how little he is qualified to decide his own claims, since he certainly demands what he would think unfit to be granted to another.

Nothing is more apparent than that, however injured, or however provoked, some must at last be contented to forgive. For it can never be hoped, that he who first commits an injury, will contentedly acquiesce in the penalty required: the same haughtiness of contempt, or vehemence of desire, that prompts the act of injustice, will more strongly incite its justification; and resentment can never so exactly balance the punishment with the fault, but

there will remain an overplus of vengeance which even he who condemns his first action will think himself entitled to retaliate. What, then, can ensue but a continual exacerbation of hatred, an unextinguishable feud, an incessant reciprocation of mischief, a mutual vigilance to entrap, and eagerness to destroy?

Since then the imaginary right of vengeance must be at last remitted, because it is impossible to live in perpetual hostility, and equally impossible that, of two enemies, either should first think himself obliged by justice to submission, it is surely eligible to forgive early. Every passion is more easily subdued before it has been long accustomed to possession of the heart; every idea is obliterated with less difficulty, as it has been more slightly impressed, and less frequently renewed. He who has often brooded over his wrongs, pleased himself with schemes of malignity, and glutted his pride with the fancied supplications of humbled enmity, will not easily open his bosom to amity and reconciliation, or indulge the gentle sentiments of benevolence and peace.

It is easiest to forgive, while there is yet little to be forgiven. A single injury may be soon dismissed from the memory; but a long succession of ill offices by degrees associates itself with every idea, a long contest involves so many circumstances, that every place and action will recall it to the mind, and fresh remembrance of vexation must still enkindle rage and irritate revenge.

A wise man will make haste to forgive, because he knows the true value of time, and will not suffer it to pass away in unnecessary pain. He that willingly suffers the corrosions of inveterate hatred, and gives up his days and nights to the gloom of

malice and perturbations of stratagem, cannot surely be said to consult his ease. Resentment is an union of sorrow with malignity, a combination of a passion which all endeavour to avoid, with a passion which all concur to detest. The man who retires to meditate mischief, and to exasperate his own rage; whose thoughts are employed only on means of distress and contrivances of ruin; whose mind never pauses from the remembrance of his own sufferings, but to indulge some hope of enjoying the calamities of another, may justly be numbered among the most miserable of human beings, among those who are guilty without reward, who have neither the gladness of prosperity nor the calm of innocence.

Whoever considers the weakness both of himself and others, will not long want persuasives to forgiveness. We know not to what degree of malignity any injury is to be imputed; or how much its guilt, if we were to inspect the mind of him that committed it, would be extenuated by mistake, precipitance, or negligence; we cannot be certain how much more we feel than was intended to be inflicted, or how much we increase the mischief to ourselves by voluntary aggravations. We may charge to design the effects of accident; we may think the blow violent only because we have made ourselves delicate and tender; we are on every side in danger of error and of guilt, which we are certain to avoid only by speedy forgiveness.

From this pacific and harmless temper, thus propitious to others and ourselves, to domestic tranquillity and to social happiness, no man is withheld but by pride, by the fear of being insulted by his adversary, or despised by the world.

It may be laid down as an unfailing and universal axiom, that 'All pride is abject and mean.' It is

always an ignorant, lazy, or cowardly acquiescence in a false appearance of excellence, and proceeds not from consciousness of our attainments, but insensibility of our wants.

Nothing can be great which is not right. Nothing which reason condemns can be suitable to the dignity of the human mind. To be driven by external motives from the path which our own heart approves, to give way to any thing but conviction, to suffer the opinion of others to rule our choice or overpower our resolves, is to submit tamely to the lowest and most ignominious slavery, and to resign the right of directing our own lives.

The utmost excellence at which humanity can arrive, is a constant and determinate pursuit of virtue, without regard to present dangers or advantage; a continual reference of every action to the divine will; an habitual appeal to everlasting justice; and an unvaried elevation of the intellectual eye to the reward which perseverance only can obtain. But that pride which many, who presume to boast of generous sentiments, allow to regulate their measures, has nothing nobler in view than the approbation of men, of beings whose superiority we are under no obligation to acknowledge, and who, when we have courted them with the utmost assidnity, can confer no valuable or permanent reward; of beings who ignorantly judge of what they do not understand, or partially determine what they never have examined; and whose sentence is therefore of no weight till it has received the ratification of our own conscience.

He that can descend to bribe suffrages like these at the price of his innocence; he that can suffer the delight of such acclamations to withhold his attention from the commands of the universal Sovereign,

has little reason to congratulate himself upon the greatness of his mind; whenever he wakes to seriousness and reflection, he must become despicable in his own eyes, and shrink with shame from the remembrance of his cowardice and folly.

Of him that hopes to be forgiven, it is indispensably required that he forgive. It is therefore superfluous to urge any other motive. On this great duty eternity is suspended, and to him that refuses to practise it, the throne of mercy is inaccessible, and the Saviour of the world has been born in vain.

No. 186. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1751.

Pone me, pigris ubi nulla campis
Arbor æstivâ recreatur aurâ;—
Dulcè ridentem Lalagen amabo,
Dulce loquentem. HOR. CAR. i. 22. 17.

Place me where never summer breeze
Unbinds the glebe, or warms the trees;
Where ever-lowering clouds appear,
And angry Jove deforms th' inclement year:—
Love and the nymph shall charm my toils,
The nymph, who sweetly speaks and sweetly smiles.
FRANCIS.

Of the happiness and misery of our present state, part arises from our sensations, and part from our opinions; part is distributed by nature, and part is in a great measure apportioned by ourselves. Positive pleasure we cannot always obtain, and positive pain we often cannot remove. No man can give to

his own plantations the fragrance of the Indian groves; nor will any precepts of philosophy enable him to withdraw his attention from wounds or diseases. But the negative infelicity which proceeds, not from the pressure of sufferings, but the absence of enjoyments, will always yield to the remedies of reason.

One of the great arts of escaping superfluous uneasiness, is to free our minds from the habit of comparing our condition with that of others on whom the blessings of life are more bountifully bestowed, or with imaginary states of delight and security, perhaps unattainable by mortals. Few are placed in a situation so gloomy and distressful, as not to see every day beings yet more forlorn and miserable, from whom they may learn to rejoice in their own lot.

No inconvenience is less superable by art or diligence than the inclemency of climates, and therefore none affords more proper exercise for this philosophical abstraction. A native of England, pinched with the frosts of December, may lessen his affection for his own country, by suffering his imagination to wander in the vales of Asia, and sport among woods that are always green, and streams that always murmur; but if he turns his thoughts towards the polar regions, and considers the nations to whom a great portion of the year is darkness, and who are condemned to pass weeks and months amidst mountains of snow, he will soon recover his tranquillity; and while he stirs his fire, or throws his cloak about him, reflect how much he owes to Providence, that he is not placed in Greenland or Siberia.

The barrenness of the earth and the severity of the skies in these dreary countries, are such as might be expected to confine the mind wholly to the

contemplation of necessity and distress, so that the care of escaping death from cold and hunger, should leave no room for those passions which, in lands of plenty, influence conduct or diversify characters; the summer should be spent wholly in providing for the winter, and the winter in longing for the summer.

Yet learned curiosity is known to have found its way into those abodes of poverty and gloom: Lapland and Iceland have their historians, their critics, and their poets; and love, that extends his dominion wherever humanity can be found, perhaps exerts the same power in the Greenlander's hut as in the palaces of eastern monarchs.

In one of the large caves to which the families of Greenland retire together, to pass the cold months, and which may be termed their villages or cities, a youth and maid, who came from different parts of the country, were so much distinguished for their beauty, that they were called by the rest of the inhabitants Anningait and Ajut, from a supposed resemblance to their ancestors of the same names, who had been transformed of old into the sun and moon.

Anningait for sometime heard the praises of Ajut with little emotion, but at last, by frequent interviews, became sensible of her charms, and first made a discovery of his affection, by inviting her with her parents to a feast, where he placed before Ajut the tail of a whale. Ajut seemed not much delighted by this gallantry; yet, however, from that time was observed to rarely appear, but in a vest made of the skin of a white deer; she used frequently to renew the black dye upon her hands and forehead, to adorn her sleeves with coral and shells, and to braid her hair with great exactness.

The elegance of her dress and the judicious disposition of her ornaments, had such an effect upon Anningait that he could no longer be restrained from a declaration of his love. He therefore composed a poem in her praise, in which, among other heroic and tender sentiments, he protested, that 'She was beautiful as the vernal willow, and fragrant as thyme upon the mountains; that her fingers were as white as the teeth of the morse, and her smile grateful as the dissolution of the ice; that he would pursue her, though she should pass the snows of the midland cliffs, or seek shelter in the caves of the eastern cannibals; that he would tear her from the embraces of the genius of the rocks, snatch her from the paws of Amaroc, and rescue her from the ravine of Hafgufa.' He concluded with a wish, that 'whoever shall attempt to hinder his union with Ajut, might be buried without his bow, and that, in the land of souls, his skull might serve for no other use than to catch the droppings of the starry lamps.'

This ode being universally applauded, it was expected that Ajut would soon yield to such fervour and accomplishments; but Ajut, with the natural haughtiness of beauty, expected all the forms of courtship; and before she would confess herself conquered, the sun returned, the ice broke, and the season of labour called all to their employments.

Anningait and Ajut, for a time, always went out in the same boat, and divided whatever was caught. Anningait, in the sight of his mistress, lost no opportunity of signalizing his courage; he attacked the sea-horses on the ice; pursued the seals into the water; and leaped upon the back of the whale, while he was yet struggling with the remains of life. Nor was his diligence less to accumulate

all that could be necessary to make winter comfortable; he dried the roe of fishes and the flesh of seals; he entrapped deer and foxes, and dressed their skins to adorn his bride; he feasted her with eggs from the rocks, and strewed her tent with flowers.

It happened that a tempest drove the fish to a distant part of the coast, before Anningait had completed his store; he therefore entreated Ajut that she would at last grant him her hand, and accompany him to that part of the country whither he was now summoned by necessity. Ajut thought him not yet entitled to such condescension, but proposed, as trial of his constancy, that he should return at the end of summer to the cavern where their acquaintance commenced, and there expect the reward of his assiduities. 'O virgin, beautiful as the sun shining on the water, consider,' said Anningait, 'what thou hast required. How easily may my return be precluded by a sudden frost or unexpected fogs; then must the night be passed without my Ajut. We live not, my fair, in those fabled countries, which lying strangers so wantonly describe; where the whole year is divided into short days and nights; where the same habitation serves for summer and winter; where they raise houses in rows above the ground, dwell together from year to year, with flocks of tame animals grazing in the fields about them; can travel at any time from one place to another, through ways inclosed with trees, or over walls raised upon the inland waters; and direct their course through wide countries by the sight of green hills or scattered buildings. Even in summer, we have no means of crossing the mountains, whose snows are never dissolved; nor can remove to any distant residence, but in our boats

coasting the bays. Consider, Ajut; a few summer days, and a few winter nights, and the life of man is at an end. Night is the time of ease and festivity, of revels and gayety; but what will be the flaming lamp, the delicious seal, or the soft oil, without the smile of Ajut?'

The eloquence of Anningait was vain; the maid continued inexorable, and they parted with ardent promises to meet again before the night of winter.

No. 187. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1751.

Non illum nostri possunt mutare labores;
Non si frigoribus mediis Hebrumque bibamus,
Sithoniasque nives hyemis subeamus aquosæ:—
Omnia vincit amor.— VIRG. ECL. X. 64.

Love alters not for us his hard decrees,
Not though beneath the Thracian clime we freeze,
Or the mild bliss of temperate skies forego,
And in mid winter tread Sithonian snow:—
Love conquers all.— DRYDEN.

Anningait, however discomposed by the dilatory coyness of Ajut, was yet resolved to omit no tokens of amorous respect; and, therefore, presented her at his departure with the skins of seven white fawns, of five swans, and eleven seals, with three marble lamps, ten vessels of seal oil, and a large kettle of brass, which he had purchased from a ship, at the price of half a whale, and two horns of sea-unicorns.

Ajut was so much affected by the fondness of her lover, or so much overpowered by his magnificence, that she followed him to the seaside; and, when she saw him enter the boat, wished aloud, that he might return with plenty of skins and oil; that neither the mermaids might snatch him into the deeps, nor the spirits of the rocks confine him in their caverns.

She stood awhile to gaze upon the departing vessel, and then returning to her hut, silent and dejected, laid aside, from that hour, her white deer-skin, suffered her hair to spread unbraided on her shoulders, and forbore to mix in the dances of the maidens. She endeavoured to divert her thoughts by continual application to feminine employments, gathered moss for the winter lamps, and dried grass to line the boots of Anningait. Of the skins which he had bestowed upon her, she made a fishing coat, a small boat, and tent, all of exquisite manufacture; and while she was thus busied, solaced her labours with a song, in which she prayed, 'that her lover might have hands stronger than the paws of the bear, and feet swifter than the feet of the reindeer; that his dart might never err, and that his boat might never leak; that he might never stumble on the ice, nor faint in the water; that the seal might rush on his harpoon, and the wounded whale might dash the waves in vain.'

The large boats in which the Greenlanders transport their families, are always rowed by women; for a man will not debase himself by work which requires neither skill nor courage. Anningait was, therefore, exposed by idleness to the ravages of passion. He went thrice to the stern of the boat, with an intent to leap into the water, and swim back to his mistress; but recollecting the misery which they

must endure in the winter, without oil for the lamp, or skins for the bed, he resolved to employ the weeks of absence in provision for a night of plenty and felicity. He then composed his emotions as he could, and expressed in wild numbers, and uncouth images, his hopes, his sorrows, and his fears. 'O life,' says he, 'frail and uncertain! where shall wretched man find thy resemblance but in ice floating on the ocean? It towers on high, it sparkles from afar, while the storms drive and the waters beat it, the sun melts it above, and the rocks shatter it below. What art thou, deceitful pleasure! but a sudden blaze streaming from the north, which plays a moment on the eye, mocks the traveller with the hopes of light, and then vanishes forever? What, love, art thou but a whirlpool, which we approach without knowledge of our danger, drawn on by imperceptible degrees, till we have lost all power of resistance and escape? Till I fixed my eyes on the graces of Ajut, while I had not yet called her to the banquet, I was careless as the sleeping morse, I was merry as the singers in the stars. Why, Ajut, did I gaze upon thy graces? why, my fair, did I call thee to the banquet? Yet, be faithful, my love, remember Anningait, and meet my return with the smile of virginity. I will chase the deer, I will subdue the whale, resistless as the frost of darkness, and unwearied as the summer's sun. In a few weeks I shall return prosperous and wealthy; then shall the roefish and the porpoise feast thy kindred; the fox and hare shall cover thy couch, the tough hide of the seal shall shelter thee from cold, and the fat of the whale illuminate thy dwelling.'

Anningait having, with these sentiments, consoled his grief and animated his industry, found that they had now coasted the headland, and saw the whales

spouting at a distance. He therefore placed himself in his fishing-boat, called his associates to their several employments, plied his oar and harpoon with incredible courage and dexterity; and, by dividing his time between the chase and fishery, suspended the miseries of absence and suspicion.

Ajut, in the mean time, notwithstanding her neglected dress, happened, as she was drying some skins in the sun, to catch the eye of Norngsuk, on his return from hunting. Norngsuk was of birth truly illustrious. His mother had died in childbirth, and his father, the most expert fisher of Greenland, had perished by too close pursuit of the whale. His dignity was equalled by his riches; he was master of four men's and two women's boats, had ninety tubs of oil in his winter habitation, and five-and-twenty seals buried in the snow against the season of darkness. When he saw the beauty of Ajut, he immediately threw over her the skin of a deer that he had taken, and soon after presented her with a branch of coral. Ajut refused his gifts, and determined to admit no lover in the place of Anningait.

Norngsuk, thus rejected, had recourse to stratagem. He knew that Ajut would consult an Angekkok, or diviner, concerning the fate of her lover, and the felicity of her future life. He therefore applied himself to the most celebrated Angekkok of that part of the country, and, by a present of two seals and a marble kettle, obtained a promise that, when Ajut would consult him, he would declare that her lover was in the land of souls. Ajut, in a short time, brought him a coat made by herself, and inquired what events were to befall her, with assurances of a much larger reward at the return of Anningait, if the prediction should flatter her de-

sires. The Angekkok knew the way to riches, and foretold that Anningait, having already caught two whales, would soon return home with a large boat laden with provisions.

This prognostication she was ordered to keep secret; and Norngsuk depending upon his artifice, renewed his addresses with greater confidence; but finding his suit still unsuccessful, applied himself to her parents with gifts and promises. The wealth of Greenland is too powerful for the virtue of a Greenlander; they forgot the merit, and the presents of Anningait, and decreed Ajut to the embraces of Norngsuk. She entreated; she remonstrated; she wept, and raved; but finding riches irresistible, fled away into the uplands, and lived in a cave upon such berries as she could gather, and the birds or hares which she had the fortune to insnare; taking care, at an hour when she was not likely to be found, to view the sea every day, that her lover might not miss her at his return.

At last, she saw the great boat in which Anningait had departed, stealing slow and heavy laden along the coast. She ran with all the impatience of affection, to catch her lover in her arms, and relate her constancy and sufferings. When the company reached the land, they informed her that Anningait, after the fishery was ended, being unable to support the slow passage of the vessel of carriage, had set out before them in his fishing-boat, and they expected at their arrival to have found him on shore.

Ajut, distracted at this intelligence, was about to fly into the hills, without knowing why, though she was now in the hands of her parents, who forced her back to their own hut, and endeavoured to comfort her; but when at last they retired to rest, Ajut went down to the beach; where finding a fishing

boat, she entered it without hesitation, and telling those who wondered at her rashness, that she was going in search of Anningait, rowed away with great swiftness, and was seen no more.

The fate of these lovers gave occasion to various fictions and conjectures. Some are of opinion that they were changed into stars; others imagine that Anningait was seized, in his passage, by the genius of the rocks, and that Ajut was transformed into a mermaid, and still continues to seek her lover in the deserts of the sea. But the general persuasion is, that they are both in that part of the land of souls where the sun never sets, where oil is always fresh, and provisions always warm. The virgins sometimes throw a thimble and a needle into the bay, from which the hapless maid departed; and when a Greenlander would praise any couple for virtuous affection, he declares that they love like Anningait and Ajut.

No. 188. SATURDAY, JANUARY 4, 1752.

—Si te colo, Sexte, non amabo.

MART. EP. ii. 55.

The more I honour thee, the less I love.

None of the desires dictated by vanity is more general, or less blamable, than that of being distinguished for the arts of conversation. Other accomplishments may be possessed without opportunity of exerting them, or wanted without danger that

the defect can often be remarked; but as no man can live otherwise than in an hermitage, without hourly pleasure or vexation, from the fondness or neglect of those about him, the faculty of giving pleasure is of continual use. Few are more frequently envied than those who have the power of enforcing attention wherever they come, whose entrance is considered as a promise of felicity, and whose departure is lamented, like the recess of the sun from northern climates, as a privation of all that enlivens fancy or inspirits gayety.

It is apparent, that to excellence in this valuable art, some peculiar qualifications are necessary; for every one's experience will inform him, that the pleasure which men are able to give in conversation, holds no stated proportion to their knowledge or their virtue. Many find their way to the tables and the parties of those who never consider them as of the least importance in any other place; we have all, at one time or other, been content to love those whom we could not esteem, and been persuaded to try the dangerous experiment of admitting him for a companion, whom we knew to be too ignorant for a counsellor, and too treacherous for a friend.

I question whether some abatement of character is not necessary to general acceptance. Few spend their time with much satisfaction under the eye of uncontestable superiority; and therefore, among those whose presence is courted at assemblies of jollity, there are seldom found men eminently distinguished for powers or acquisitions. The wit whose vivacity condemns slower tongues to silence, the scholar whose knowledge allows no man to fancy that he instructs him, the critic who suffers no fallacy to pass undetected, and the reasoner who condemns the idle to thought, and the negligent to

attention, are generally praised and feared, reverenced and avoided.

He that would please must rarely aim at such excellence as depresses his hearers in their own opinion, or debars them from the hope of contributing reciprocally to the entertainment of the company. Merriment, extorted by sallies of imagination, sprightliness of remark, or quickness of reply, is too often what the Latins call, the Sardinian laughter, a distortion of the face without gladness of heart.

For this reason, no style of conversation is more extensively acceptable than the narrative. He who has stored his memory with slight anecdotes, private incidents, and personal peculiarities, seldom fails to find his audience favourable. Almost every man listens with eagerness to contemporary history; for almost every man has some real or imaginary connection with a celebrated character; some desire to advance or oppose a rising name. Vanity often coöperates with curiosity. He that is a hearer in one place, qualifies himself to become a speaker in another; for though he cannot comprehend a series of argument, or transport the volatile spirit of wit without evaporation, yet he thinks himself able to treasure up the various incidents of a story, and pleases his hopes with the information which he shall give to some inferior society.

Narratives are, for the most part, heard without envy, because they are not supposed to imply any intellectual qualities above the common rate. To be acquainted with facts not yet echoed by plebeian mouths, may happen to one man as well as to another; and to relate them when they are known, has in appearance so little difficulty, that every one concludes himself equal to the task.

But it is not easy, and in some situations of life not possible, to accumulate such a stock of materials as may support the expense of continual narration; and it frequently happens, that they who attempt this method of ingratiating themselves, please only at the first interview; and, for want of new supplies of intelligence, wear out their stories by continual repetition.

There would be, therefore, little hope of obtaining the praise of a good companion, were it not to be gained by more compendious methods; but such is the kindness of mankind to all, except those who aspire to real merit and rational dignity, that every understanding may find some way to excite benevolence, and whoever is not envied may learn the art of procuring love. We are willing to be pleased, but are not willing to admire; we favour the mirth of officiousness that solicits our regard, but oppose the worth or spirit that enforces it.

The first place among those that please, because they desire only to please, is due to the merry fellow, whose laugh is loud, and whose voice is strong; who is ready to echo every jest with obstreperous approbation, and countenance every frolic with vociferations of applause. It is not necessary to a merry fellow to have in himself any fund of jocularity, or force of conception; it is sufficient that he always appears in the highest exaltation of gladness; for the greater part of mankind are gay or serious by infection, and follow without resistance the attraction of example.

Next to the merry fellow is the good-natured man, a being generally without benevolence, or any other virtue, than such as indolence and insensibility confer. The characteristic of a good-natured

man is to bear a joke; to sit unmoved and unaffected amidst noise and turbulence, profaneness and obscenity; to hear every tale without contradiction; to endure insult without reply; and to follow the stream of folly, whatever course it shall happen to take. The good-natured man is commonly the darling of the petty wits, with whom they exercise themselves in the rudiments of raillery; for he never takes advantage of failings, nor disconcerts a puny satirist with unexpected sarcasms; but while the glass continues to circulate, contentedly bears the expense of uninterrupted laughter, and retires rejoicing at his own importance.

The modest man is a companion of a yet lower rank, whose only power of giving pleasure is not to interrupt it. The modest man satisfies himself with peaceful silence, which all his companions are candid enough to consider as proceeding not from inability to speak, but willingness to hear.

Many, without being able to attain any general character of excellence, have some single art of entertainment, which serves them as a passport through the world. One I have known for fifteen years the darling of a weekly club, because every night precisely at eleven, he begins his favourite song, and during the vocal performance, by corresponding motions with his hand, chalks out a giant upon the wall. Another has endeared himself to a long succession of acquaintances by sitting among them with his wig reversed; another by contriving to smut the nose of any stranger who was to be initiated in the club; another by purring like a cat, and then pretending to be frighted; and another by yelping like a hound, and calling to the drawers to drive out the dog.

Such are the arts by which cheerfulness is pro-

moted, and sometimes friendship established; arts, which those who despise them should not rigorously blame, except when they are practised at the expense of innocence; for it is always necessary to be loved, but not always necessary to be reverenced.

No. 189. TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 1752.

Quod tam grande sophos clamat tibi turba togata,
Non tu, Pomponi, cœna diserta tua est.

MART. EPIG. vi. 48.

Resounding plaudits through the crowd have rung;
Thy treat is eloquent, and not thy tongue.

F. LEWIS.

THE world scarcely affords opportunities of making any observation more frequently, than on false claims to condemnation. Almost every man wastes part of his life in attempts to display qualities which he does not possess, and to gain applause which he cannot keep; so that scarcely can two persons casually meet, but one is offended or diverted by the ostentation of the other.

Of these pretenders it is fit to distinguish those who endeavour to deceive from them who are deceived; those who by designed impostures promote their interest or gratify their pride, from them who mean only to force into regard their latent excellences and neglected virtues; who believe themselves qualified to instruct or please, and therefore invite the notice of mankind.

The artful and fraudulent usurpers of distinction deserve greater severities than ridicule and contempt, since they are seldom content with empty praise, but are instigated by passions more pernicious than vanity. They consider the reputation which they endeavour to establish as necessary to the accomplishment of some subsequent design, and value praise only as it may conduce to the success of avarice or ambition.

The commercial world is very frequently put into confusion by the bankruptcy of merchants, that assumed the splendour of wealth only to obtain the privilege of trading with the stock of other men, and of contracting debts which nothing but lucky casualties could enable them to pay; till, after having supported their appearance a while by tumultuary magnificence of boundless traffic, they sink at once, and drag down into poverty those whom their equipages had induced to trust them.

Among wretches that place their happiness in the favour of the great, of beings whom only high titles or large estates set above themselves, nothing is more common than to boast of confidence which they do not enjoy; to sell promises which they know their interest unable to perform; and to reimburse the tribute which they pay to an imperious master, from the contributions of meaner dependents, whom they can amuse with tales of their influence, and hopes of their solicitation.

Even among some, too thoughtless and volatile for avarice or ambition, may be found a species of falsehood more detestable than the levee or exchange can show. There are men that boast of debaucheries, of which they never had address to be guilty; ruin, by lewd tales, the characters of women to whom they are scarcely known, or by

whom they have been rejected; destroy in a drunken frolic the happiness of families; blast the bloom of beauty, and intercept the reward of virtue.

Other artifices of falsehood, though utterly unworthy of an ingenious mind, are not yet to be ranked with flagitious enormities, nor is it necessary to incite sanguinary justice against them, since they may be adequately punished by detection and laughter. The traveller who describes cities which he has never seen; the squire who, at his return from London, tells of his intimacy with nobles, to whom he has only bowed in the park or coffee-house; the author who entertains his admirers with stories of the assistance which he gives to wits of a higher rank; the city dame who talks of her visits at great houses, where she happens to know the cook-maid, are surely such harmless animals as truth herself may be content to despise without desiring to hurt them.

But of the multitudes who struggle in vain for distinction, and display their own merits only to feel more acutely the sting of neglect, a great part are wholly innocent of deceit, and are betrayed, by infatuation and credulity, to that scorn with which the universal love of praise incites us all to drive feeble competitors out of our way.

Few men survey themselves with so much severity, as not to admit prejudices in their own favour, which an artful flatterer may gradually strengthen, till wishes for a particular qualification are improved to hopes of attainment, and hopes of attainment to belief of possession. Such flatterers every one will find, who has power to reward their assiduities. Wherever there is wealth, there will be dependence and expectation; and wherever there is dependence, there will be an emulation of servility.

Many of the follies which provoke general censure are the effects of such vanity as, however it might have wantoned in the imagination, would scarcely have dared the public eye, had it not been animated and emboldened by flattery. Whatever difficulty there may be in the knowledge of ourselves, scarcely any one fails to suspect his own imperfections till he is elevated by others to confidence. We are almost all naturally modest and timorous; but fear and shame are uneasy sensations, and whosoever helps to remove them is received with kindness.

Turpicula was the heiress of a large estate, and, having lost her mother in her infancy, was committed to a governess whom misfortunes had reduced to suppleness and humility. The fondness of Turpicula's father would not suffer him to trust her at a public school, but he hired domestic teachers, and bestowed on her all the accomplishments that wealth could purchase. But how many things are necessary to happiness which money cannot obtain! Thus secluded from all with whom she might converse on terms of equality, she heard none of those intimations of her defects, which envy, petulance, or anger, produce among children, where they are not afraid of telling what they think.

Turpicula saw nothing but obsequiousness, and heard nothing but commendations. None are so little acquainted with the heart, as not to know that woman's first wish is to be handsome, and that consequently the readiest method of obtaining her kindness is to praise her beauty. Turpicula had a distorted shape and a dark complexion; yet, when the impudence of adulation had ventured to tell her of the commanding dignity of her motion, and the soft enchantment of her smile, she was easily convinced,

that she was the delight or torment of every eye, and that all who gazed upon her felt the fire of envy or love. She, therefore, neglected the culture of an understanding which might have supplied the defects of her form, and applied all her care to the decoration of her person; for she considered that more could judge of beauty than of wit, and was, like the rest of human beings, in haste to be admired. The desire of conquests naturally led her to the lists in which beauty signalizes her power. She glittered at court, fluttered in the park, and talked aloud in the front-box: but, after a thousand experiments of her charms, was at last convinced that she had been flattered, and that her glass was honester than her maid.

No. 190. SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 1752.

Ploravere suis, non respondere favorem
Speratum meritis.— HOR. EPIST. ii. 1. 9.

Henry and Alfred—
Closed their long glories with a sigh, to find
Th' unwilling gratitude of base mankind. POPE.

Among the emirs and vizirs, the sons of valour and of wisdom, that stand at the corners of the Indian throne, to assist the councils or conduct the wars of the posterity of Timur, the first place was long held by Morad, the son of Hanuth. Morad, having signalized himself in many battles and sieges, was

rewarded with the government of a province, from which the fame of his wisdom and moderation was wafted to the pinnacles of Agra, by the prayers of those whom his administration made happy. The emperor called him into his presence, and gave into his hand the keys of riches and the sabre of command. The voice of Morad was heard from the cliffs of Taurus to the Indian Ocean, every tongue faltered in his presence, and every eye was cast down before him.

Morad lived many years in prosperity; every day increased his wealth and extended his influence. The sages repeated his maxims, the captains of thousands waited his commands. Competition withdrew into the cavern of envy, and discontent trembled at her own murmurs. But human greatness is short and transitory, as the odour of incense in the fire. The sun grew weary of gilding the palaces of Morad, the clouds of sorrow gathered round his head, and the tempest of hatred roared about his dwelling.

Morad saw ruin hastily approaching. The first that forsook him were his poets; their example was followed by all those whom he had rewarded for contributing to his pleasures, and only a few, whose virtue had entitled them to favour, were now to be seen in his hall or chambers. He felt his danger, and prostrated himself at the foot of the throne. His accusers were confident and loud, his friends stood contented with frigid neutrality, and the voice of truth was overborne by clamour. He was divested of his power, deprived of his acquisitions, and condemned to pass the rest of his life on his hereditary estate.

Morad had been so long accustomed to crowds and business, supplicants and flattery, that he knew

not how to fill up his hours in solitude; he saw with regret the sun rise to force on his eye a new day for which he had no use; and envied the savage that wanders in the desert, because he has no time vacant from the calls of nature, but is always chasing his prey, or sleeping in his den.

His discontent in time vitiated his constitution, and a slow disease seized upon him. He refused physic, neglected exercise, and lay down on his couch peevish and restless, rather afraid to die than desirous to live. His domestics, for a time, redoubled their assiduities; but finding that no officiousness could soothe, nor exactness satisfy, they soon gave way to negligence and sloth, and he that once commanded nations, often languished in his chamber without an attendant.

In this melancholy state, he commanded messengers to recall his eldest son Abouzaid from the army. Abouzaid was alarmed at the account of his father's sickness, and hasted, by long journeys, to his place of residence. Morad was yet living, and felt his strength return at the embraces of his son, then commanding him to sit down at his bedside: 'Abouzaid,' says he, 'thy father has no more to hope or fear from the inhabitants of the earth, the cold hand of the angel of death is now upon him, and the voracious grave is howling for his prey. Hear, therefore, the precepts of ancient experience; let not my last instructions issue forth in vain. Thou hast seen me happy and calamitous, thou hast beheld my exaltation and my fall. My power is in the hands of my enemies, my treasures have rewarded my accusers; but my inheritance the clemency of the emperor has spared, and my wisdom his anger could not take away. Cast thine eyes round thee, whatever thou beholdest will in a few

hours be thine; apply thine ear to my dictates, and these possessions will promote thy happiness. Aspire not to public honours, enter not the palaces of kings; thy wealth will set thee above insult, let thy moderation keep thee below envy. Content thyself with private dignity, diffuse thy riches among thy friends, let every day extend thy beneficence, and suffer not thy heart to be at rest till thou art loved by all to whom thou art known. In the height of my power, I said to defamation, Who will hear thee? and to artifice, What canst thou perform? But, my son, despise not thou the malice of the weakest, remember that venom supplies the want of strength, and that the lion may perish by the puncture of an asp.'

Morad expired in a few hours. Abouzaid, after the months of mourning, determined to regulate his conduct by his father's precepts, and cultivate the love of mankind by every art of kindness and endearment. He wisely considered that domestic happiness was first to be secured, and that none have so much power of doing good or hurt as those who are present in the hour of negligence, hear the bursts of thoughtless merriment, and observe the starts of unguarded passion. He therefore augmented the pay of all his attendants, and requited every exertion of uncommon diligence by supernumerary gratuities. While he congratulated himself upon the fidelity and affection of his family, he was in the night alarmed with robbers, who being pursued and taken, declared that they had been admitted by one of his servants; the servant immediately confessed that he unbarred the door, because another not more worthy of confidence was intrusted with the keys.

Abouzaid was thus convinced that a dependent

could not easily be made a friend; and that while many were soliciting for the first rank of favour, all those would be alienated whom he disappointed. He therefore resolved to associate with a few equal companions, selected from among the chief men of the province. With these he lived happily for a time, till familiarity set them free from restraint, and every man thought himself at liberty to indulge his own caprice and advance his own opinions. They then disturbed each other with contrariety of inclinations and difference of sentiments, and Abouzaid was necessitated to offend one party by concurrence, or both by indifference.

He afterwards determined to avoid a close union with beings so discordant in their nature, and to diffuse himself in a larger circle. He practised the smile of universal courtesy, and invited all to his table, but admitted none to his retirements. Many who had been rejected in his choice of friendship now refused to accept his acquaintance; and of those whom plenty and magnificence drew to his table, every one pressed forward toward intimacy, thought himself overlooked in the crowd, and murmured because he was not distinguished above the rest. By degrees all made advances, and all resented repulse. The table was then covered with delicacies in vain; the music sounded in empty rooms; and Abouzaid was left to form, in solitude, some new scheme of pleasure or security.

Resolving now to try the force of gratitude, he inquired for men of science, whose merit was obscured by poverty. His house was soon crowded with poets, sculptors, painters, and designers, who wantoned in unexperienced plenty, and employed their powers in celebration of their patron. But in a short time they forgot the distress from which

they had been rescued, and began to consider their deliverer as a wretch of narrow capacity, who was growing great by works which he could not perform, and whom they overpaid by condescending to accept his bounties. Abouzaid heard their murmurs and dismissed them, and, from that hour, continued blind to colours, and deaf to panegyric.

As the sons of art departed, muttering threats of perpetual infamy, Abouzaid, who stood at the gate, called to him Hamet the poet. 'Hamet,' said he, 'thy ingratitude has put an end to my hopes and experiments; I have now learned the vanity of those labours that wish to be rewarded by human benevolence; I shall henceforth do good and avoid evil, without respect to the opinion of men; and resolve to solicit only the approbation of that Being whom alone we are sure to please by endeavouring to please him.'

No. 191. TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 1752.

Cereus in vitium flecti, monitoribus asper.
HOR. ARS POET. 163.

The youth—
Yielding like wax, th' impressive folly bears;
Rough to reproof, and slow to future cares. FRANCIS.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"DEAR MR. RAMBLER,

"I HAVE been four days confined to my chamber by a cold, which has already kept me from three plays, nine sales, five shows, and six card-tables, and put me seventeen visits behindhand; and the doctor tells my mamma, that if I fret and cry, it will settle in my head, and I shall not be fit to be seen these six weeks. But, dear Mr. Rambler, how can I help it? At this very time, Melissa is dancing with the prettiest gentleman;—she will breakfast with him to-morrow, and then run to two auctions, and hear compliments, and have presents; then she will be drest and visit, and get a ticket to the play; then go to cards and win, and come home with two flambeaux before her chair. Dear Mr. Rambler, who can bear it?

"My aunt has just brought me a bundle of your papers for my amusement. She says, you are a philosopher, and will teach me to moderate my desires, and look upon the world with indifference. But, dear Sir, I do not wish, nor intend to moderate my desires, nor can I think it proper to look upon

the world with indifference, till the world looks with indifference on me. I have been forced, however, to sit this morning a whole quarter of an hour with your paper before my face; but just as my aunt came in, Phyllida had brought me a letter from Mr. Trip, which I put within the leaves, and read about absence and inconsolableness, and ardour, and irresistible passion, and eternal constancy, while my aunt imagined that I was puzzling myself with your philosophy, and often cried out, when she saw me look confused: 'If there is any word that you do not understand, child, I will explain it.'

"Dear soul! how old people that think themselves wise may be imposed upon! But it is fit that they should take their turn, for I am sure, while they can keep poor girls close in the nursery, they tyrannize over us in a very shameful manner, and fill our imaginations with tales of terror, only to make us live in quiet subjection, and fancy that we can never be safe but by their protection.

"I have a mamma and two aunts, who have all been formerly celebrated for wit and beauty, and are still generally admired by those that value themselves upon their understanding, and love to talk of vice and virtue, nature and simplicity, and beauty and propriety; but if there was not some hope of meeting me, scarcely a creature would come near them that wears a fashionable coat. These ladies, Mr. Rambler, have had me under their government fifteen years and a half, and have all that time been endeavouring to deceive me by such representations of life as I now find not to be true; but I know not whether I ought to impute them to ignorance or malice, as it is possible the world may be much changed since they mingled in general conversation.

"Being desirous that I should love books, they told me, that nothing but knowledge could make me an agreeable companion to men of sense, or qualify me to distinguish the superficial glitter of vanity from the solid merit of understanding; and that a habit of reading would enable me to fill up the vacuities of life without the help of silly or dangerous amusements, and preserve me from the snares of idleness and the inroads of temptation.

"But their principal intention was to make me afraid of men; in which they succeeded so well for a time, that I durst not look in their faces, or be left alone with them in a parlour; for they made me fancy, that no man ever spoke but to deceive, or looked but to allure; that the girl who suffered him that had once squeezed her hand to approach her a second time, was on the brink of ruin; and that she who answered a billet without consulting her relations, gave love such power over her, that she would certainly become either poor or infamous.

"From the time that my leading-strings were taken off, I scarce heard any mention of my beauty but from the milliner, the mantuamaker, and my own maid; for my mamma never said more, when she heard me commended, but 'The girl is very well,' and then endeavoured to divert my attention by some inquiry after my needle or my book.

"It is now three months since I have been suffered to pay and receive visits, to dance at public assemblies, to have a place kept for me in the boxes, and to play at lady Racket's rout; and you may easily imagine what I think of those who so long cheated me with false expectations, disturbed me with fictitious terrors, and concealed from me all that I have found to make the happiness of woman.

"I am so far from perceiving the usefulness or necessity of books, that if I had not dropped all pretensions to learning, I should have lost Mr. Trip, whom I once frighted into another box, by retailing some of Dryden's remarks upon a tragedy; for Mr. Trip declares that he hates nothing like hard words, and I am sure there is not a better partner to be found; his very walk is a dance. I have talked once or twice among ladies about principles and ideas, but they put their fans before their faces, and told me I was too wise for them, who for their part never pretended to read any thing but the play-bill, and then asked me the price of my best head.

"Those vacancies of time which are to be filled up with books I have never yet obtained; for consider, Mr. Rambler, I go to bed late, and therefore cannot rise early; as soon as I am up, I dress for the gardens; then walk in the park; then always go to some sale or show, or entertainment at the little theatre; then must be dressed for dinner; then must pay my visits; then walk in the park; then hurry to the play; and from thence to the card-table. This is the general course of the day, when there happens nothing extraordinary; but sometimes I ramble into the country, and come back again to a ball; sometimes I am engaged for a whole day and part of the night. If, at any time, I can gain an hour by not being at home, I have so many things to do, so many orders to give to the milliner, so many alterations to make in my clothes, so many visitants' names to read over, so many invitations to accept or refuse, so many cards to write, and so many fashions to consider, that I am lost in confusion, forced at last to let

in company or step into my chair, and leave half my affairs to the direction of my maid.

"This is the round of my day; and when shall I either stop my course, or so change it as to want a book? I suppose it cannot be imagined that any of these diversions will soon be at an end. There will always be gardens, and a park, and auctions, and shows, and play-houses, and cards; visits will always be paid, and clothes always be worn: and how can I have time unemployed upon my hands?

"But I am most at a loss to guess for what purpose they related such tragic stories of the cruelty, perfidy, and artifices of men, who, if they ever were so malicious and destructive, have certainly now reformed their manners. I have not, since my entrance into the world, found one who does not profess himself devoted to my service, and ready to live or die, as I shall command him. They are so far from intending to hurt me, that their only contention is, who shall be allowed most closely to attend, and most frequently to treat me; when different places of entertainment, or schemes of pleasure are mentioned, I can see the eye sparkle and the cheeks glow of him whose proposals obtain my approbation: he then leads me off in triumph, adores my condescension, and congratulates himself that he has lived to the hour of felicity. Are these, Mr. Rambler, creatures to be feared? Is it likely that any injury will be done me by those who can enjoy life only while I favour them with my presence?

"As little reason can I yet find to suspect them of stratagems and fraud. When I play at cards they never take advantage of my mistakes, nor exact from me a rigorous observation of the game. Even Mr. Shuffle, a grave gentleman, who has

daughters older than myself, plays with me so negligently, that I am sometimes inclined to believe he loses his money by design; and yet he is so fond of play, that he says he will one day take me to his house in the country, that we may try by ourselves who can conquer. I have not yet promised him; but when the town grows a little empty, I shall think upon it, for I want some trinkets, like Letitia's, to my watch. I do not doubt my luck, but must study some means of amusing my relations.

"For all these distinctions I find myself indebted to that beauty which I was never suffered to hear praised, and of which, therefore, I did not before know the full value. This concealment was certainly an intentional fraud, for my aunts have eyes like other people, and I am every day told, that nothing but blindness can escape the influence of my charms. Their whole account of that world which they pretend to know so well, has been only one fiction entangled with another; and though the modes of life oblige me to continue some appearances of respect, I cannot think that they, who have been so clearly detected in ignorance or imposture, have any right to the esteem, veneration, or obedience of,

"Sir, yours,

"BELLARIA."

No. 192. SATURDAY, JANUARY 18, 1752.

Γένος οὐδὲν εἰς ἔρωτα,
Σοφίη, τρόπος πατεῖται·
Μόνον ἀργυρον βλέπουσιν.
Ἀπόλοιτο πρῶτος αὐτὸς
Ὁ τὸν ἄργυρον φιλήσας.
Διὰ τοῦτον οὐκ ἀδελφὸς,
Διὰ τοῦτον οὐ τοκῆες.
Πόλεμοι, φόνοι δι' αὐτόν.
Τὸ δὲ χεῖρον, ὀλλύμεσθα
Διὰ τοῦτον οἱ φιλοῦντες. ANACREON.

Vain the noblest birth would prove,
Nor worth nor wit avail in love;
'T is gold alone succeeds—by gold
The venal sex is bought and sold.
Accurs'd be he who first of yore
Discover'd the pernicious ore!
This sets a brother's heart on fire,
And arms the son against the sire.
And what, alas! is worse than all,
To this the lover owes his fall. F. LEWIS.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

"I AM the son of a gentleman, whose ancestors, for many ages, held the first rank in the county; till at last one of them, too desirous of popularity, set his house open, kept a table covered with continual profusion, and distributed his beef and ale to such as chose rather to live upon the folly of others than their own labour, with such thoughtless liberality, that he left a third part of his estate mortgaged. His successor, a man of spirit, scorned to impair his

dignity by parsimonious retrenchments, or to admit, by a sale of his lands, any participation of the rights of his manor; he therefore made another mortgage to pay the interest of the former, and pleased himself with the reflection, that his son would have the hereditary estate without the diminution of an acre.

"Nearly resembling this was the practice of my wise progenitors for many ages. Every man boasted the antiquity of his family, resolved to support the dignity of his birth, and lived in splendour and plenty at the expense of his heir, who, sometimes by a wealthy marriage, and sometimes by lucky legacies, discharged part of the incumbrances, and thought himself entitled to contract new debts, and to leave to his children the same inheritance of embarrassment and distress.

"Thus the estate perpetually decayed; the woods were felled by one, the park ploughed by another, the fishery let to farmers by a third; at last, the old hall was pulled down to spare the cost of reparation, and part of the materials sold to build a small house with the rest. We were now openly degraded from our original rank, and my father's brother was allowed, with less reluctance, to serve an apprenticeship, though we never reconciled ourselves heartily to the sound of haberdasher, but always talked of warehouses and a merchant, and when the wind happened to blow loud, affected to pity the hazards of commerce, and to sympathize with the solicitude of my poor uncle, who had the true retailer's terror of adventure, and never exposed himself or his property to any wider water than the Thames.

"In time, however, by continual profit and small expenses, he grew rich, and began to turn his

thoughts towards rank. He hung the arms of the family over his parlour chimney; pointed at a chariot decorated only with a cipher; became of opinion that money could not make a gentleman; resented the petulance of upstarts; told stories of alderman Puff's grandfather the porter; wondered that there was no better method for regulating precedence; wished for some dress peculiar to men of fashion; and when his servant presented a letter, always inquired whether it came from his brother the esquire.

"My father was careful to send him game by every carrier, which, though the conveyance often cost more than the value, was well received because it gave him an opportunity of calling his friends together, describing the beauty of his brother's seat, and lamenting his own folly, whom no remonstrances could withhold from polluting his fingers with a shop-book.

"The little presents which we sent were always returned with great munificence. He was desirous of being the second founder of his family, and could not bear that we should be any longer outshone by those whom we considered as climbers upon our ruins, and usurpers of our fortune. He furnished our house with all the elegance of fashionable expense, and was careful to conceal his bounties, lest the poverty of his family should be suspected.

"At length it happened that, by misconduct like our own, a large estate, which had been purchased from us, was again exposed to the best bidder. My uncle, delighted with an opportunity of reinstating the family in their possessions, came down with treasures scarcely to be imagined in a place where commerce has not made large sums familiar,

and at once drove all the competitors away, expedited the writings, and took possession. He now considered himself as superior to trade, disposed of his stock, and as soon as he had settled his economy, began to show his rural sovereignty, by breaking the hedges of his tenants in hunting, and seizing the guns or nets of those whose fortunes did not qualify them for sportsmen. He soon afterwards solicited the office of sheriff, from which all his neighbors were glad to be reprieved, but which he regarded as a resumption of ancestral claims, and a kind of restoration to blood after the attainder of a trade.

"My uncle, whose mind was so filled with this change of his condition, that he found no want of domestic entertainment, declared himself too old to marry, and resolved to let the newly-purchased estate fall into the regular channel of inheritance. I was therefore considered as heir apparent, and courted with officiousness and caresses, by the gentlemen who had hitherto coldly allowed me that rank which they could not refuse, depressed me with studied neglect, and irritated me with ambiguous insults.

"I felt not much pleasure from the civilities for which I knew myself indebted to my uncle's industry, till by one of the invitations which every day now brought me, I was induced to spend a week with Lucius, whose daughter Flavilla I had often seen and admired like others, without any thought of nearer approaches. The inequality which had hitherto kept me at a distance being now levelled, I was received with every evidence of respect; Lucius told me the fortune which he intended for his favourite daughter, many odd accidents obliged us to be often together without

company, and I soon began to find that they were spreading for me the nets of matrimony.

"Flavilla was all softness and complaisance. I, who had been excluded by a narrow fortune from much acquaintance with the world, and never been honoured before with the notice of so fine a lady, was easily enamoured. Lucius either perceived my passion, or Flavilla betrayed it; care was taken that our private meetings should be less frequent, and my charmer confessed by her eyes how much pain she suffered from our restraint. I renewed my visit upon every pretence, but was not allowed one interview without witness; at last, I declared my passion to Lucius, who received me as a lover worthy of his daughter, and told me that nothing was wanting to his consent, but that my uncle should settle his estate upon me. I objected the indecency of encroaching on his life, and the danger of provoking him by such an unseasonable demand. Lucius seemed not to think decency of much importance, but admitted the danger of displeasing, and concluded that as he was now old and sickly, we might, without any inconvenience, wait for his death.

"With this resolution I was better contented, as it procured me the company of Flavilla, in which the days passed away amidst continual rapture; but in time I began to be ashamed of sitting idle, in expectation of growing rich by the death of my benefactor, and proposed to Lucius many schemes of raising my own fortune by such assistance as I knew my uncle willing to give me. Lucius, afraid lest I should change my affection in absence, diverted me from my design by dissuasives to which my passion easily listened. At last my uncle died, and considering himself as neglected

by me, from the time that Flavilla took possession of my heart, left his estate to my younger brother, who was always hovering about his bed, and relating stories of my pranks and extravagance, my contempt for the commercial dialect, and my impatience to be selling stock.

"My condition was soon known, and I was no longer admitted by the father of Flavilla. I repeated the protestations of regard, which had been formerly returned with so much ardour, in a letter which she received privately, but returned by her father's footman. Contempt has driven out my love, and I am content to have purchased, by the loss of fortune, an escape from a harpy, who has joined the artifices of age to the allurements of youth. I am now going to pursue my former projects with a legacy which my uncle bequeathed me, and, if I succeed, shall expect to hear of the repentance of Flavilla.

"I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

"CONSTANTIUS."

No. 193. TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 1752.

Laudis amore tumes? sunt certa piacula, quæ te
Ter purè lecto poterunt recreare libello.

HOR. EPIST. i. 1. 36.

Or art thou vain? books yield a certain spell,
To stop thy tumour; you shall cease to swell
When you have read them thrice, and studied well.

CREECH.

WHATEVER is universally desired, will be sought by industry and artifice, by merit and crimes, by means good and bad. rational and absurd, according to the prevalence of virtue or vice, of wisdom or folly. Some will always mistake the degree of their own desert, and some will desire that others may mistake it. The cunning will have recourse to stratagem, and the powerful to violence, for the attainment of their wishes; some will stoop to theft, and others venture upon plunder.

Praise is so pleasing to the mind of man, that it is the original motive of almost all our actions. The desire of commendation, as of every thing else, is varied, indeed, by innumerable differences of temper, capacity, and knowledge; some have no higher wish than for the applause of a club; some expect the acclamations of a county; and some have hoped to fill the mouths of all ages and nations with their names. Every man pants for the highest eminence within his view; none, however mean, ever sinks below the hope of being distinguished by his fellow beings, and very few have by magna-

nimity or piety been so raised above it, as to act wholly without regard to censure or opinion.

To be praised, therefore, every man resolves; but resolutions will not execute themselves. That which all think too parsimoniously distributed to their own claims, they will not gratuitously squander upon others, and some expedient must be tried, by which praise may be gained before it can be enjoyed.

Among the innumerable bidders for praise, some are willing to purchase at the highest rate, and offer ease and health, fortune and life. Yet even of these only a small part have gained what they so earnestly desired: the student wastes away in meditation, and the soldier perishes on the ramparts; but unless some accidental advantage coöperates with merit, neither perseverance nor adventure attract attention, and learning and bravery sink into the grave, without honour or remembrance.

But ambition and vanity generally expect to be gratified on easier terms. It has been long observed, that what is procured by skill or labour to the first possessor, may be afterwards transferred for money: and that the man of wealth may partake all the acquisitions of courage without hazard, and all the products of industry without fatigue. It was easily discovered, that riches would obtain praise among other conveniences, and that he whose pride was unluckily associated with laziness, ignorance, or cowardice, needed only to pay the hire of a panegyrist, and he might be regaled with periodical eulogies; might determine at leisure, what virtue or science he would be pleased to appropriate, and be lulled in the evening with soothing serenades, or waked in the morning by sprightly gratulations.

The happiness which mortals receive from the celebration of beneficence which never relieved, eloquence which never persuaded, or elegance which never pleased, ought not to be envied or disturbed, when they are known honestly to pay for their entertainment. But there are unmerciful exactors of adulation, who withhold the wages of venality; retain their encomiast from year to year by general promises and ambiguous blandishments; and when he has run through the whole compass of flattery, dismiss him with contempt, because his vein of fiction is exhausted.

A continual feast of commendation is only to be obtained by merit or by wealth; many are therefore obliged to content themselves with single morsels, and recompense the infrequency of their enjoyment by excess and riot, whenever fortune sets the banquet before them. Hunger is never delicate; they who are seldom gorged to the full with praise, may be safely fed with gross compliments; for the appetite must be satisfied before it is disgusted.

It is easy to find the moment at which vanity is eager for sustenance, and all that impudence or servility can offer will be well received. When any one complains of the want of what he is known to possess in an uncommon degree, he certainly waits with impatience to be contradicted. When the trader pretends anxiety about the payment of his bills, or the beauty remarks how frightfully she looks, then is the lucky moment to talk of riches or of charms, of the death of lovers, or the honour of a merchant.

Others there are yet more open and artless, who instead of suborning a flatterer, are content to supply his place, and, as some animals impregnate themselves, swell with the praises which they hear

from their own tongues. *Recte is dicitur laudare sese, cui nemo alius contigit laudator.* 'It is right,' says Erasmus, 'that he whom no one else will commend, should bestow commendations on himself.' Of all the sons of vanity, these are surely the happiest and greatest; for, what is greatness or happiness but independence on external influences, exemption from hope or fear, and the power of supplying every want from the common stores of nature, which can neither be exhausted nor prohibited? Such is the wise man of the stoics; such is the divinity of the epicureans; and such is the flatterer of himself. Every other enjoyment malice may destroy; every other panegyric envy may withhold; but no human power can deprive the boaster of his own encomiums. Infamy may hiss, or contempt may growl, the hirelings of the great may follow fortune, and the votaries of truth may attend on virtue; but his pleasures still remain the same; he can always listen with rapture to himself, and leaves those who dare not repose upon their own attestation, to be elated or depressed by chance, and toil on in the hopeless task of fixing caprice and propitiating malice.

This art of happiness has been long practised by periodical writers, with little apparent violation of decency. When we think our excellences overlooked by the world, or desire to recall the attention of the public to some particular performance, we sit down with great composure and write a letter to ourselves. The correspondent, whose character we assume, always addresses us with the deference due to a superior intelligence; proposes his doubts with a proper sense of his own inability; offers an objection with trembling diffidence; and at last has no other pretensions to our notice than his profundity

of respect, and sincerity of admiration, his submission to our dictates, and zeal for our success. To such a reader it is impossible to refuse regard, nor can it easily be imagined with how much alacrity we snatch up the pen which indignation or despair had condemned to inactivity, when we find such candor and judgment yet remaining in the world.

A letter of this kind I had lately the honor of perusing, in which, though some of the periods were negligently closed, and some expressions of familiarity were used, which I thought might teach others to address me with too little reverence, I was so much delighted with the passages in which mention was made of universal learning — unbounded genius — soul of Homer, Pythagoras, and Plato — solidity of thought — accuracy of distinction — elegance of combination — vigor of fancy — strength of reason — and regularity of composition — that I had once determined to lay it before the public. Three times I sent it to the printer, and three times I fetched it back. My modesty was on the point of yielding, when, reflecting that I was about to waste panegyrics on myself, which might be more profitably reserved for my patron, I locked it up for a better hour, in compliance with the farmer's principle, who never eats at home what he can carry to the market.

No. 194. SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 1752.

Si damnosa senem juvat alea, ludit et hæres
Bullatus, parvoque eadem quatit arma fritillo.

JUV. SAT. XIV. 4.

If gaming does an aged sire entice,
Then my young master swiftly learns the vice,
And shakes in hanging sleeves the little box and dice.

J. DRYDEN, JUN.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

"THAT vanity which keeps every man important in his own eyes, inclines me to believe that neither you nor your readers have yet forgotten the name of Eumathes, who sent you a few months ago an account of his arrival at London with a young nobleman, his pupil. I shall therefore continue my narrative without preface or recapitulation.

"My pupil, in a very short time, by his mother's countenance and direction, accomplished himself with all those qualifications which constitute puerile politeness. He became in a few days a perfect master of his hat, which with a careless nicety he could put off or on, without any need to adjust it by a second motion. This was not attained but by frequent consultations with his dancing-master, and constant practice before the glass, for he had some rustic habits to overcome; but, what will not time and industry perform? A fortnight more furnished him with all the airs and forms of familiar and

respectful salutation, from the clap on the shoulder to the humble bow; he practises the stare of strangeness, and the smile of condescension, the solemnity of promise, and the graciousness of encouragement, as if he had been nursed at a levee; and pronounces, with no less propriety than his father, the monosyllables of coldness, and sonorous periods of respectful profession.

"He immediately lost the reserve and timidity which solitude and study are apt to impress upon the most courtly genius; was able to enter a crowded room with airy civility; to meet the glances of a hundred eyes without perturbation; and address those whom he never saw before, with ease and confidence. In less than a month his mother declared her satisfaction at his proficiency by a triumphant observation, that she believed nothing would make him blush.

"The silence with which I was contented to hear my pupil's praises, gave the lady reason to suspect me not much delighted with his acquisitions; but she attributed my discontent to the diminution of my influence, and my fears of losing the patronage of the family; and though she thinks favorably of my learning and morals, she considers me as wholly unacquainted with the customs of the polite part of mankind; and therefore not qualified to form the manners of a young nobleman, or communicate the knowledge of the world. This knowledge she comprises in the rules of visiting, the history of the present hour, an early intelligence of the change of fashions, an extensive acquaintance with the names and faces of persons of rank, and a frequent appearance in places of resort.

"All this my pupil pursues with great application. He is twice a-day in the Mall, where he studies the

dress of every man splendid enough to attract his notice, and never comes home without some observation upon sleeves, buttonholes, and embroidery. At his return from the theatre, he can give an account of the gallantries, glances, whispers, smiles, sighs, flirts, and blushes of every box, so much to his mother's satisfaction, that when I attempted to resume my character, by inquiring his opinion of the sentiments and diction of the tragedy, she at once repressed my criticism, by telling me that she hoped he did not go to lose his time in attending to the creatures on the stage.

"But his acuteness was most eminently signalized at the masquerade, where he discovered his acquaintance through their disguises, with such wonderful facility, as has afforded the family an inexhaustible topic of conversation. Every new visitor is informed how one was detected by his gait, and another by the swing of his arms, a third by the toss of his head, and another by his favorite phrase; nor can you doubt but these performances receive their just applause, and a genius thus hastening to maturity is promoted by every art of cultivation.

"Such have been his endeavors, and such his assistances, that every trace of literature was soon obliterated. He has changed his language with his dress, and instead of endeavouring at purity or propriety, has no other care than to catch the reigning phrase and current exclamation, till by copying whatever is peculiar in the talk of all those whose birth or fortune entitle them to imitation, he has collected every fashionable barbarism of the present winter, and speaks a dialect not to be understood among those who form their style by poring upon authors.

"To this copiousness of ideas and felicity of lan-

guage, he has joined such eagerness to lead the conversation, that he is celebrated among the ladies as the prettiest gentleman that the age can boast of, except that some who love to talk themselves think him too forward, and others lament that, with so much wit and knowledge, he is not taller.

"His mother listens to his observations with her eyes sparkling and her heart beating, and can scarcely contain, in the most numerous assemblies, the expectations which she has formed for his future eminence. Women, by whatever fate, always judge absurdly of the intellects of boys. The vivacity and confidence which attract female admiration, are seldom produced in the early part of life, but by ignorance at least, if not by stupidity; for they proceed not from confidence of right, but fearlessness of wrong. Whoever has a clear apprehension, must have quick sensibility, and where he has no sufficient reason to trust his own judgment, will proceed with doubt and caution, because he perpetually dreads the disgrace of error. The pain of miscarriage is naturally proportionate to the desire of excellence; and, therefore, till men are hardened by long familiarity with reproach, or have attained, by frequent struggles, the art of suppressing their emotions, diffidence is found the inseparable associate of understanding.

"But so little distrust has my pupil of his own abilities, that he has for some time professed himself a wit, and tortures his imagination on all occasions for burlesque and jocularity. How he supports a character which, perhaps, no man ever assumed without repentance, may be easily conjectured. Wit, you know, is the unexpected copulation of ideas, the discovery of some occult relation between images in appearance remote from each

other ; an effusion of wit, therefore, presupposes an accumulation of knowledge ; a memory stored with notions, which the imagination may cull out to compose new assemblages. Whatever may be the native vigour of the mind, she can never form many combinations from few ideas, as many changes can never be rung upon a few bells. Accident may, indeed, sometimes produce a lucky parallel or a striking contrast ; but these gifts of chance are not frequent, and he that has nothing of his own, and yet condemns himself to needless expenses, must live upon loans or theft.

"The indulgence which his youth has hitherto obtained, and the respect which his rank secures, have hitherto supplied the want of intellectual qualifications ; and he imagines that all admire who applaud, and that all who laugh are pleased. He therefore returns every day to the charge with increase of courage, though not of strength, and practises all the tricks by which wit is counterfeited. He lays trains for a quibble ; he contrives blunders for his footman ; he adapts old stories to present characters ; he mistakes the question, that he may return a smart answer ; he anticipates the argument, that he may plausibly object ; when he has nothing to reply, he repeats the last words of his antagonist, then says, 'your humble servant,' and concludes with a laugh of triumph.

"These mistakes I have honestly attempted to correct ; but, what can be expected from reason, unsupported by fashion, splendour, or authority? He hears me, indeed, or appears to hear me, but is soon rescued from the lecture by more pleasing avocations ; and shows, diversions, and caresses, drive my precepts from his remembrance.

"He at last imagines himself qualified to enter

the world, and has met with adventures in his first sally, which I shall, by your paper, communicate to the public.

"I am, &c.,
"EUMATHES."

No. 195. TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 1752.

—Nescit equo rudis
Hærere ingenuus puer,
Venarique timet; ludere doctior
Seu Græco jubeas trocho,
Seu malis vetitâ legibus aleâ.

HOR. CAR. iii. 24. 54.

Nor knows our youth of noblest race,
To mount the managed steed, or urge the chase;
More skill'd in the mean arts of vice,
The whirling troque, or law-forbidden dice.

FRANCIS.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

"FAVOURS of every kind are doubled when they are speedily conferred. This is particularly true of the gratification of curiosity; he that long delays a story, and suffers his auditor to torment himself with expectation, will seldom be able to recompense the uneasiness, or equal the hope which he suffers to be raised.

"For this reason, I have already sent you the continuation of my pupil's history, which, though it contains no events very uncommon, may be of use

to young men who are in too much haste to trust their own prudence, and quit the wing of protection before they are able to shift for themselves.

"When he first settled in London, he was so much bewildered in the enormous extent of the town, so confounded by incessant noise, and crowds, and hurry, and so terrified by rural narratives of the arts of sharpers, the rudeness of the populace, malignity of porters, and treachery of coachmen, that he was afraid to go beyond the door without an attendant, and imagined his life in danger if he was obliged to pass the streets at night in any vehicle but his mother's chair.

"He was therefore contented, for a time, that I should accompany him in all his excursions. But his fear abated as he grew more familiar with its objects; and the contempt to which his rusticity exposed him from such of his companions as had accidentally known the town longer, obliged him to dissemble his remaining terrors.

"His desire of liberty made him now willing to spare me the trouble of observing his motions; but knowing how much his ignorance exposed him to mischief, I thought it cruel to abandon him to the fortune of the town. We went together every day to a coffee-house, where he met wits, heirs, and fops, airy, ignorant, and thoughtless as himself, with whom he had become acquainted at card-tables, and whom he considered as the only beings to be envied or admired. What were their topics of conversation I could never discover; for so much was their vivacity depressed by my intrusive seriousness, that they seldom proceeded beyond the exchange of nods and shrugs, an arch grin, or a broken hint, except when they could retire, while I was looking on the papers, to a corner of the room, where they seemed to dis-

burthen their imaginations, and commonly vented the superfluity of their sprightliness in a peal of laughter. When they had tittered themselves into negligence, I could sometimes overhear a few syllables, such as: solemn rascal;—academical airs;—smoke the tutor;—company for gentlemen!—and other broken phrases, by which I did not suffer my quiet to be disturbed, for they never proceeded to avowed indignities, but contented themselves to murmur in secret, and, whenever I turned my eye upon them, shrunk into stillness.

"He was, however, desirous of withdrawing from the subjection which he could not venture to break, and made a secret appointment to assist his companions in the persecution of a play. His footman privately procured him a catcall, on which he practised in a back-garret for two hours in the afternoon. At the proper time a chair was called; he pretended an engagement at Lady Flutter's, and hastened to the place where his critical associates had assembled. They hurried away to the theatre, full of malignity and denunciations against a man whose name they had never heard, and a performance which they could not understand; for they were resolved to judge for themselves, and would not suffer the town to be imposed upon by scribblers. In the pit, they exerted themselves with great spirit and vivacity;—called out for the tunes of obscene songs, talked loudly at intervals of Shakspeare and Johnson, played on their catcalls a short prelude of terror, clamoured vehemently for the prologue, and clapped with great dexterity at the first entrance of the players.

"Two scenes they heard without attempting interruption; but being no longer able to restrain their impatience, they then began to exert themselves

in groans and hisses, and plied their catcalls with incessant diligence ; so that they were soon considered by the audience as disturbers of the house, and some who sat near them, either provoked at the obstruction of their entertainment, or desirous to preserve the author from the mortification of seeing his hopes destroyed by children, snatched away their instruments of criticism, and by the seasonable vibration of a stick, subdued them instantaneously to decency and silence.

"To exhilarate themselves after this vexatious defeat, they posted to a tavern, where they recovered their alacrity, and after two hours of obstreperous jollity, burst out big with enterprise, and panting for some occasion to signalize their prowess. They proceeded vigorously through two streets, and with very little opposition dispersed a rabble of drunkards less daring than themselves, then rolled two watchmen in the kennel, and broke the windows of a tavern in which the fugitives took shelter. At last, it was determined to march up to a row of chairs, and demolish them for standing on the pavement;—the chairmen formed a line of battle, and blows were exchanged for a time with equal courage on both sides. At last, the assailants were overpowered, and the chairmen, when they knew their captives, brought them home by force.

"The young gentleman, next morning, hung his head, and was so much ashamed of his outrages and defeat, that perhaps he might have been checked in his first follies, had not his mother, partly in pity of his dejection, and partly in approbation of his spirit, relieved him from his perplexity by paying the damages privately, and discouraging all animadversion and reproof.

"This indulgence could not wholly preserve him

from the remembrance of his disgrace, nor at once restore his confidence and elation. He was for three days, silent, modest, and compliant, and thought himself neither too wise for instruction, nor too manly for restraint. But his levity overcame this salutary sorrow; he began to talk with his former raptures of masquerades, taverns, and frolics; blustered when his wig was not combed with exactness; and threatened destruction to a tailor who had mistaken his directions about the pocket.

"I knew that he was now rising again above control, and that this inflation of spirits would burst out into some mischievous absurdity. I therefore watched him with great attention; but one evening having attended his mother at a visit, he withdrew himself, unsuspected, while the company was engaged at cards. His vivacity and officiousness were soon missed, and his return impatiently expected; supper was delayed, and conversation suspended; every coach that rattled through the street was expected to bring him, and every servant that entered the room was examined concerning his departure. At last the lady returned home, and was with great difficulty preserved from fits by spirits and cordials. The family was dispatched a thousand ways without success, and the house was filled with distraction, till, as we were deliberating what further measures to take, he returned from a petty gaming-table, with his coat torn, and his head broken; without his sword, snuffbox, sleeve-buttons, and watch.

"Of this loss or robbery, he gave little account; but, instead of sinking into his former shame, endeavoured to support himself by surliness and asperity. 'He was not the first that had played away a few trifles, and of what use were birth and

fortune if they would not admit some sallies and expenses?' His mamma was so much provoked by the cost of this prank, that she would neither palliate nor conceal it; and his father, after some threats of rustication which his fondness would not suffer him to execute, reduced the allowance of his pocket, that he might not be tempted by plenty to profusion. This method would have succeeded in a place where there are no panders to folly and extravagance, but was now likely to have produced pernicious consequences; for we have discovered a treaty with a broker, whose daughter he seems disposed to marry, on condition that he shall be supplied with present money, for which he is to repay thrice the value at the death of his father.

"There was now no time to be lost. A domestic consultation was immediately held, and he was doomed to pass two years in the country; but his mother, touched with his tears, declared that she thought him too much a man to be any longer confined to his book, and he therefore begins his travels to-morrow under a French governor.

"I am, Sir, &c.,

"EUMATHES."

No. 196. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1752.

Multa ferunt anni venientes commoda secum.
Multa recedentes adimunt.—

HOR. ARS POET. 175.

The blessings flowing in with life's full tide,
Down with our ebb of life decreasing glide.

FRANCIS.

Baxter, in the narrative of his own life, has enumerated several opinions, which, though he thought them evident and incontestable at his first entrance into the world, time and experience disposed him to change.

Whoever reviews the state of his own mind from the dawn of manhood to its decline, and considers what he pursued or dreaded, slighted or esteemed at different periods of his age, will have no reason to imagine such changes of sentiment peculiar to any station or character. Every man, however careless and inattentive, has conviction forced upon him: the lectures of time obtrude themselves upon the most unwilling or dissipated auditor; and, by comparing our past with our present thoughts, we perceive that we have changed our minds, though perhaps we cannot discover when the alteration happened, or by what cause it was produced.

This revolution of sentiments occasions a perpetual contest between the old and young. They who imagine themselves entitled to veneration by the prerogative of longer life, are inclined to treat the notions of those whose conduct they superintend with superciliousness and contempt, for want of

considering that the future and the past have different appearances; that the disproportion will always be great between expectation and enjoyment, between new possession and satiety; that the truth of many maxims of age, gives too little pleasure to be allowed till it is felt; and that the miseries of life would be increased beyond all human power of endurance, if we were to enter the world with the same opinion as we carry from it.

We naturally indulge those ideas that please us. Hope will predominate in every mind, till it has been suppressed by frequent disappointments. The youth has not yet discovered how many evils are continually hovering about us, and when he is set free from the shackles of discipline, looks abroad into the world with rapture; he sees an elysian region open before him, so variegated with beauty, and so stored with pleasure, that his care is rather to accumulate good, than to shun evil; he stands distracted by different forms of delight, and has no other doubt, than which path to follow of those which all lead equally to the bowers of happiness.

He who has seen only the superficies of life believes every thing to be what it appears, and rarely suspects that external splendour conceals any latent sorrow or vexation. He never imagines that there may be greatness without safety, affluence without content, jollity without friendship, and solitude without peace. He fancies himself permitted to cull the blessings of every condition, and to leave its inconveniences to the idle and the ignorant. He is inclined to believe no man miserable but by his own fault, and seldom looks with much pity upon failings or miscarriages, because he thinks them willingly admitted, or negligently incurred.

It is impossible, without pity and contempt, to

hear a youth of generous sentiments and warm imagination, declaring in the moment of openness and confidence his designs and expectations; because long life is possible, he considers it as certain, and therefore promises himself all the changes of happiness, and provides gratifications for every desire. He is, for a time, to give himself wholly to frolic and diversion, to range the world in search of pleasure, to delight every eye, to gain every heart, and to be celebrated equally for his pleasing levities and solid attainments, his deep reflections and his sparking repartees. He then elevates his views to nobler enjoyments, and finds all the scattered excellences of the female world united in a woman who prefers his addresses to wealth and titles; he is afterwards to engage in business, to dissipate difficulty, and overpower opposition; to climb by the mere force of merit to fame and greatness; and reward all those who countenanced his rise, or paid due regard to his early excellence. At last, he will retire in peace and honour; contract his views to domestic pleasures; form the manners of children like himself; observe how every year expands the beauty of his daughters, and how his sons catch ardour from their father's history; he will give laws to the neighbourhood; dictate axioms to posterity; and leave the world an example of wisdom and of happiness.

With hopes like these, he sallies jocund into life; to little purpose is he told that the condition of humanity admits no pure and unmingled happiness; that the exuberant gayety of youth ends in poverty or disease; that uncommon qualifications and contrarieties of excellence produce envy equally with applause; that, whatever admiration and fondness may promise him, he must marry a wife like the

wives of others, with some virtues and some faults, and be as often disgusted by her vices, as delighted by her elegance; that if he adventures into the circle of action, he must expect to encounter men as artful, as daring, as resolute as himself; that of his children, some may be deformed, and others vicious; some may disgrace him by their follies, some offend him by their insolence, and some exhaust him by their profusion. He hears all this with obstinate incredulity, and wonders by what malignity old age is influenced, that it cannot forbear to fill his ears with predictions of misery.

Among other pleasing errors of young minds, is the opinion of their own importance. He that has not yet remarked, how little attention his contemporaries can spare from their own affairs, conceives all eyes turned upon himself, and imagines every one that approaches him to be an enemy or a follower, an admirer or a spy. He therefore considers his fame as involved in the event of every action. Many of the virtues and vices of youth proceed from this quick sense of reputation. This it is that give firmness and constancy, fidelity and disinterestedness, and it is this that kindles resentment for slight injuries, and dictates all the principles of sanguinary honour.

But as time brings him forward into the world, he soon discovers that he only shares fame or reproach with innumerable partners; that he is left unmarked in the obscurity of the crowd; and that what he does, whether good or bad, soon gives way to new objects of regard. He then easily sets himself free from the anxieties of reputation, and considers praise or censure as a transient breath, which, while he hears it, is passing away, without any lasting mischief or advantage.

In youth, it is common to measure right and wrong by the opinion of the world, and in age to act without any measure but interest, and to lose shame without substituting virtue.

Such is the condition of life, that something is always wanting to happiness. In youth, we have warm hopes, which are soon blasted by rashness and negligence, and great designs which are defeated by inexperience. In age, we have knowledge and prudence, without spirit to exert, or motives to prompt them; we are able to plan schemes, and regulate measures, but have not time remaining to bring them to completion.

No. 197. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1752.

Cujus vulturis hoc erit cadaver? MART. EP. vi. 62.

Say, to what vulture's share this carcass falls?

F. LEWIS.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

"I BELONG to an order of mankind, considerable at least for their number, to which your notice has never been formally extended, though equally entitled to regard with those triflers, who have hitherto supplied you with topics of amusement or instruction. I am, Mr. Rambler, a legacy hunter; and as every man is willing to think well of the tribe in

which his name is registered, you will forgive my vanity if I remind you that the legacy hunter, however degraded by an ill-compounded appellation in our barbarous language, was known, as I am told, in ancient Rome, by the sonorous titles of Captator and Hæredipeta.

"My father was an attorney in the country, who married his master's daughter in hopes of a fortune which he did not obtain, having been, as he afterwards discovered, chosen by her only because she had no better offer, and was afraid of service. I was the first offspring of a marriage thus reciprocally fraudulent, and therefore could not be expected to inherit much dignity or generosity, and if I had them not from nature, was not likely ever to attain them; for in the years which I spent at home, I never heard any reason for action or forbearance, but that we should gain money or lose it; nor was taught any other style of commendation, than that Mr. Sneaker is a warm man, Mr. Gripe has done his business, and needs care for nobody.

"My parents, though otherwise not great philosophers, knew the force of early education, and took care that the blank of my understanding should be filled with impressions of the value of money. My mother used, upon all occasions, to inculcate some salutary axioms, such as might incite me to keep what I had, and get what I could; she informed me that we were in a world, where all must catch that catch can; and as I grew up, stored my memory with deeper observations; restrained me from the usual puerile expenses by remarking that many a little made a mickle; and, when I envied the finery of any of my neighbours, told me, that Brag was a good dog, but Holdfast was a better.

"I was soon sagacious enough to discover that I

was not born to great wealth; and, having heard no other name for happiness, was sometimes inclined to repine at my condition. But my mother always relieved me, by saying, that there was money enough in the family, that it was good to be of kin to means, that I had nothing to do but to please my friends, and I might come to hold up my head with the best squire in the country.

"These splendid expectations arose from our alliance to three persons of considerable fortune. My mother's aunt had attended on a lady, who, when she died, rewarded her officiousness and fidelity with a large legacy. My father had two relations, of whom one had broken his indentures and run to sea, from whence, after an absence of thirty years, he returned with ten thousand pounds; and the other had lured an heiress out of a window, who, dying of her first child, had left him her estate, on which he lived without any other care than to collect his rents, and preserve from poachers that game which he could not kill himself.

"These hoarders of money were visited and courted by all who had any pretence to approach them, and received presents and compliments from cousins who could scarcely tell the degree of their relation. But we had peculiar advantages, which encouraged us to hope that we should by degrees supplant our competitors. My father, by his profession, made himself necessary in their affairs; for the sailor and the chambermaid, he inquired out mortgages and securities, and wrote bonds and contracts; and had endeared himself to the old woman, who once rashly lent a hundred pounds without consulting him, by informing her that her debtor was on the point of bankruptcy, and posting so expeditiously with an execution that all the other creditors were defrauded.

"To the squire he was a kind of steward, and had distinguished himself in his office by his address in raising the rents, his inflexibility in distressing the tardy tenants, and his acuteness in setting the parish free from burdensome inhabitants, by shifting them off to some other settlement.

"Business made frequent attendance necessary: trust soon produced intimacy; and success gave a claim to kindness; so that we had opportunity to practise all the arts of flattery and endearment. My mother, who could not support the thoughts of losing any thing, determined that all their fortunes should centre in me; and, in the prosecution of her schemes, took care to inform me that nothing cost less than good words, and that it is comfortable to leap into an estate which another has got.

"She trained me by these precepts to the utmost ductility of obedience, and the closest attention to profit. At an age when other boys are sporting in the fields, or murmuring in the school, I was contriving some new method of paying my court; inquiring the age of my future benefactors; or considering how I should employ their legacies.

"If our eagerness of money could have been satisfied with the possessions of any one of my relations, they might perhaps have been obtained; but as it was impossible to be always present with all three, our competitors were busy to efface any trace of affection which we might have left behind; and since there was not, on any part, such superiority of merit as could enforce a constant and unshaken preference, whoever was the last that flattered or obliged, had, for a time, the ascendant.

"My relations maintained a regular exchange of courtesy, took care to miss no occasion of condolence or congratulation, and sent presents at stated times, but had in their hearts not much esteem for

one another. The seaman looked with contempt upon the squire as a milk-sop and a landman, who had lived without knowing the points of the compass, or seeing any part of the world beyond the county town; and whenever they met, would talk of longitude and latitude, and circles and tropics, would scarcely tell him the hour without some mention of the horizon and meridian, nor show him the news without detecting his ignorance of the situation of other countries.

"The squire considered the sailor as a rude uncultivated savage, with little more of human than his form, and diverted himself with his ignorance of all common objects and affairs; when he could persuade him to go into the field, he always exposed him to the sportsmen, by sending him to look for game in improper places; and once prevailed upon him to be present at the races, only that he might show the gentlemen how a sailor sat upon a horse.

"The old gentlewoman thought herself wiser than both, for she lived with no servant but a maid, and saved her money. The others were indeed sufficiently frugal; but the squire could not live without dogs and horses, and the sailor never suffered the day to pass but over a bowl of punch, to which, as he was not critical in the choice of his company, every man was welcome that could roar out a catch, or tell a story.

"All these, however, I was to please: an arduous task; but what will not youth and avarice undertake? I had an unresisting suppleness of temper, and an unsatiable wish for riches; I was perpetually instigated by the ambition of my parents, and assisted occasionally by their instructions. What these advantages enabled me to perform, shall be told in the next letter of,

"Yours, &c.,

"CAPTATOR."

No. 198. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1752.

Nil mihi das vivus: dicis post fata daturum,
Si non insanis, scis, Maro, quid cupiam.

MART. EP. xi. 68.

You 've told me, Maro, whilst you live,
You 'd not a single penny give,
But that whene'er you chance to die,
You 'd leave a handsome legacy:
You must be mad beyond redress,
If my next wish you cannot guess. F. LEWIS.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

"YOU, who must have observed the inclination which almost every man, however inactive or insignificant, discovers of representing his life as distinguished by extraordinary events, will not wonder that Captator thinks his narrative important enough to be continued. Nothing is more common than for those to tease their companions with their history, who have neither done nor suffered any thing that can excite curiosity or afford instruction.

"As I was taught to flatter with the first essays of speech, and had very early lost every other passion in the desire of money, I began my pursuit with omens of success; for I divided my officiousness so judiciously among my relations, that I was equally the favourite of all. When any of them entered the door, I went to welcome him with raptures; when he went away, I hung down my head, and sometimes entreated to go with him with so

much importunity, that I very narrowly escaped a consent which I dreaded in my heart. When, at an annual entertainment, they were altogether, I had a harder task; but plied them so impartially with caresses, that none could charge me with neglect; and when they were wearied with my fondness and civilities, I was always dismissed, with money, to buy playthings.

"Life cannot be kept at a stand; the years of innocence and prattle were soon at an end, and other qualifications were necessary to recommend me to continuance of kindness. It luckily happened that none of my friends had high notions of book-learning. The sailor hated to see tall boys shut up in a school, when they might more properly be seeing the world, and making their fortunes; and was of opinion, that when the first rules of arithmetic were known, all that was necessary to make a man complete might be learned on shipboard. The squire only insisted that so much scholarship was indispensably necessary, as might confer ability to draw a lease and read the court-hands; and the old chambermaid declared loudly her contempt of books, and her opinion that they only took the head off the main chance.

"To unite, as well as we could, all their systems, I was bred at home. Each was taught to believe that I followed his directions, and I gained likewise, as my mother observed, this advantage, that I was always in the way; for she had known many favourite children sent to schools or academies, and forgotten.

"As I grew fitter to be trusted to my own discretion, I was often dispatched upon various pretences to visit my relations, with directions from my parents how to ingratiate myself, and drive away competitors.

"I was, from my infancy, considered by the sailor as a promising genius, because I liked punch better than wine; and I took care to improve this prepossession by continual inquiries about the art of navigation, the degree of heat and cold in different climates, the profits of trade, and the dangers of shipwreck. I admired the courage of the seaman, and gained his heart by importuning him for a recital of his adventures, and a sight of his foreign curiosities. I listened with an appearance of close attention to stories which I could already repeat, and at the close never failed to express my resolution to visit distant countries, and my contempt of the cowards and drones that spend all their lives in their native parish; though I had in reality no desire of any thing but money, nor ever felt the stimulations of curiosity or ardour of adventure, but would contentedly have passed the years of Nestor in receiving rents and lending upon mortgages.

"The squire I was able to please with less hypocrisy, for I really thought it pleasant enough to kill the game and eat it. Some arts of falsehood, however, the hunger of gold persuaded me to practise, by which, though no other mischief was produced, the purity of my thoughts was vitiated, and the reverence for truth gradually destroyed. I sometimes purchased fish, and pretended to have caught them; I hired the countrymen to show me partridges, and then gave my uncle intelligence of their haunt; I learned the seats of hares at night, and discovered them in the morning with sagacity that raised the wonder and envy of old sportsmen. One only obstruction to the advancement of my reputation I could never fully surmount; I was naturally a coward, and was therefore always left shamefully behind, when there was necessity to leap a hedge, to

swim a river, or force the horses to their utmost speed; but as these exigencies did not frequently happen, I maintained my honour with sufficient success, and was never left out of a hunting party.

"The old chambermaid was not so certainly, nor so easily pleased, for she had no predominant passion but avarice, and was therefore cold and inaccessible. She had no conception of any virtue in a young man but that of saving his money. When she heard of my exploits in the field, she would shake her head, inquire how much I should be the richer for all my performances, and lament that such sums should be spent upon dogs and horses. If the sailor told her of my inclination to travel, she was sure there was no place like England, and could not imagine why any man that can live in his own country should leave it. This sullen and frigid being I found means however to propitiate, by frequent commendations of frugality, and perpetual care to avoid expense.

"From the sailor was our first and most considerable expectation; for he was richer than the chambermaid, and older than the squire. He was so awkward and bashful among women, that we concluded him secure from matrimony; and the noisy fondness with which he used to welcome me to his house, made us imagine that he would look out for no other heir, and that we had nothing to do but wait patiently for his death. But in the midst of our triumph, my uncle saluted us one morning with a cry of transport, and clapping his hand hard on my shoulder, told me I was a happy fellow to have a friend like him in the world, for he came to fit me out for a voyage with one of his old acquaintances. I turned pale and trembled; my father told him that he believed my constitution not fitted to the

sea; and my mother bursting into tears, cried out, that her heart would break if she lost me. All this had no effect; the sailor was unsusceptive of the softer passions, and, without regard to tears or arguments, persisted in his resolution to make me a man.

"We were obliged to comply in appearance, and preparations were accordingly made. I took leave of my friends with great alacrity, proclaimed the beneficence of my uncle with the highest strains of gratitude, and rejoiced at the opportunity now put into my hands of gratifying my thirst of knowledge. But, a week before the day appointed for my departure, I fell sick, by my mother's direction, and refused all food but what she privately brought me; whenever my uncle visited me I was lethargic or delirious, but took care in my raving fits to talk incessantly of travel and merchandise. The room was kept dark; the table was filled with vials and gallipots; my mother was with difficulty persuaded not to endanger her life with nocturnal attendance; my father lamented the loss of the profits of the voyage; and such superfluity of artifice was employed, as perhaps might have discovered the cheat to a man of penetration. But the sailor, unacquainted with subtilties and stratagems, was easily deluded; and as the ship could not stay for my recovery, sold the cargo, and left me to reëstablish my health at leisure.

"I was sent to regain my flesh in a purer air, lest it should appear never to have been wasted, and in two months returned to deplore my disappointment. My uncle pitied my dejection, and bid me prepare myself against next year, for no landlubber should touch his money.

"A reprieve however was obtained, and perhaps some new stratagem might have succeeded another

spring; but my uncle unhappily made amorous advances to my mother's maid, who, to promote so advantageous a match, discovered the secret, with which only she had been intrusted. He stormed and raved, and declaring that he would have heirs of his own, and not give his substance to cheats and cowards, married the girl in two days, and has now four children.

"Cowardice is always scorned, and deceit universally detested. I found my friends, if not wholly alienated, at least cooled in their affection; the squire, though he did not wholly discard me, was less fond, and often inquired when I would go to sea. I was obliged to bear his insults, and endeavoured to rekindle his kindness by assiduity and respect; but all my care was vain; he died without a will, and the estate devolved to the legal heir.

"Thus has the folly of my parents condemned me to spend in flattery and attendance those years in which I might have been qualified to place myself above hope or fear. I am arrived at manhood without any useful art or generous sentiment; and, if the old woman should likewise at last deceive me, am in danger at once of beggary and ignorance.

"I am, &c.,

"CAPTATOR."

No. 199. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1752.

Decolor, obscurus, vilis, non ille repexam
Cesariem regum, nec candida virginis ornat
Colla, nec insigni splendet per cingula morsu:
Sed nova si nigri videas miracula saxi,
Tunc superat pulchros cultus, et quicquid Eois
Indus littoribus rubra scrutatur in alga. CLAUD.

Obscure, unprized, and dark, the magnet lies,
Nor lures the search of avaricious eyes,
Nor binds the neck, nor sparkles in the hair,
Nor dignifies the great, nor decks the fair.
But search the wonders of the dusky stone,
And own all glories of the mine outdone,
Each grace of form, each ornament of state,
That decks the fair, or dignifies the great.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"SIR,

"THOUGH you have seldom digressed from moral subjects, I suppose you are not so rigorous or cynical as to deny the value or usefulness of natural philosophy; or to have lived in this age of inquiry and experiment, without any attention to the wonders every day produced by the pokers of magnetism and the wheels of electricity. At least, I may be allowed to hope that, since nothing is more contrary to moral excellence than envy, you will not refuse to promote the happiness of others, merely because you cannot partake of their enjoyments.

"In confidence, therefore, that your ignorance has not made you an enemy to knowledge, I offer you the honour of introducing to the notice of the pub-

lic, an adept, who having long laboured for the benefit of mankind, is not willing, like too many of his predecessors, to conceal his secrets in the grave.

"Many have signalized themselves by melting their estates in crucibles. I was born to no fortune, and therefore had only my mind and body to devote to knowledge, and the gratitude of posterity will attest that neither mind nor body have been spared. I have sat whole weeks without sleep by the side of an athanor, to watch the moment of projection; I have made the first experiment in nineteen diving engines of new construction; I have fallen eleven times speechless under the shock of electricity; I have twice dislocated my limbs, and once fractured my skull, in essaying to fly; and four times endangered my life by submitting to the transfusion of blood.

"In the first period of my studies, I exerted the powers of my body more than those of my mind, and was not without hopes that fame might be purchased by a few broken bones without the toil of thinking; but having been shattered by some violent experiments, and constrained to confine myself to my books, I passed six-and-thirty years in searching the treasures of ancient wisdom, but am at last amply recompensed for all my perseverance.

"The curiosity of the present race of philosophers, having been long exercised upon electricity, has been lately transferred to magnetism; the qualities of the loadstone have been investigated, if not with much advantage, yet with great applause; and as the highest praise of art is to imitate nature, I hope no man will think the makers of artificial magnets celebrated or reverenced above their deserts.

"I have for some time employed myself in the

same practice, but with deeper knowledge and more extensive views. While my contemporaries were touching needles and raising weights, or busying themselves with inclination and variation, I have been examining those qualities of magnetism which may be applied to the accommodation and happiness of common life. I have left to inferior understandings the care of conducting the sailor through the hazards of the ocean, and reserved to myself the more difficult and illustrious province of preserving the connubial compact from violation, and setting mankind free forever from the danger of suppositious children, and the torments of fruitless vigilance and anxious suspicion.

"To defraud any man of his due praise is unworthy of a philosopher; I shall therefore openly confess, that I owe the first hint of this inestimable secret to the Rabbi Abraham Ben Hannase, who, in his treatise of precious stones, has left this account of the magnet, הקאלאמיטא, &c. 'The calamita, or loadstone that attracts iron, produces many bad fantasies in man. Women fly from this stone. If therefore any husband be disturbed with jealousy, and fear lest his wife converses with other men, let him lay this stone upon her while she is asleep. If she be pure, she will, when she wakes, clasp her husband fondly in her arms; but if she be guilty, she will fall out of bed, and run away.'

"When first I read this wonderful passage, I could not easily conceive why it had remained hitherto unregarded in such a zealous competition for magnetical fame. It would surely be unjust to suspect that any of the candidates are strangers to the name or works of Rabbi Abraham, or to conclude, from a late edict of the Royal Society in favour of the English language, that philosophy and

literature are no longer to act in concert. Yet, how should a quality so useful escape promulgation but by the obscurity of the language in which it was delivered? Why are footmen and chambermaids paid on every side for keeping secrets, which no caution nor expense could secure from the all-penetrating magnet? Or, why are so many witnesses summoned, and so many artifices practised, to discover what so easy an experiment would infallibly reveal?

"Full of this perplexity, I read the lines of Abraham to a friend, who advised me to expose my life by a mad indulgence of the love of fame; he warned me by the fate of Orpheus, that knowledge or genius could give no protection to the invader of female prerogatives; assured me that neither the armour of Achilles, nor the antidote of Mithridates, would be able to preserve me; and counselled me, if I could not live without renown, to attempt the acquisition of universal empire, in which the honour would perhaps be equal and the danger certainly be less.

"I, a solitary student, pretend not to much knowledge of the world, but am unwilling to think it so generally corrupt, as that a scheme for the detection of incontinence should bring any danger upon its inventor. My friend has, indeed, told me that all the women will be my enemies, and that however I flatter myself with hopes of defence from the men, I shall certainly find myself deserted in the hour of danger. Of the young men, said he, some will be afraid of sharing the disgrace of their mothers, and some the danger of their mistresses; of those who are married, part are already convinced of the falsehood of their wives, and part shut their eyes to avoid conviction; few ever sought for virtue in

marriage, and therefore few will try whether they have found it. Almost every man is careless or timorous, and to trust is easier and safer than to examine.

"These observations discouraged me, till I began to consider what reception I was likely to find among the ladies, whom I have reviewed under the three classes of maids, wives, and widows; and cannot but hope that I may obtain some countenance among them. The single ladies I suppose universally ready to patronize my method, by which connubial wickedness may be detected, since no woman marries with a previous design to be unfaithful to her husband. And to keep them steady in my cause, I promise never to sell one of my magnets to a man who steals a girl from school; marries a woman forty years younger than himself; or employs the authority of parents to obtain a wife without her own consent.

"Among the married ladies, notwithstanding the insinuations of slander, I yet resolve to believe, that the greater part are my friends, and am at least convinced that they who demand the test, and appear on my side, will supply, by their spirit, the deficiency of their numbers, and that their enemies will shrink and quake at the sight of a magnet, as the slaves of Scythia fled from the scourge.

"The widows will be confederated in my favour by their curiosity, if not by their virtue; for it may be observed that women who have outlived their husbands, always think themselves entitled to superintend the conduct of young wives; and as they are themselves in no danger from the magnetic trial, I shall expect them to be eminently and unanimously zealous in recommending it.

"With these hopes, I shall, in a short time, offer

to sale magnets armed with a particular metallic composition, which concentrates their virtue and determines their agency. It is known that the efficacy of a magnet, in common operations, depends much upon its armature, and it cannot be imagined that a stone, naked, or cased only in the common manner, will discover the virtues ascribed to it by Rabbi Abraham. The secret of this metal I shall carefully conceal, and, therefore, am not afraid of imitators, nor shall trouble the offices with solicitation for a patent.

"I shall sell them of different sizes, and various degrees of strength. I have some of a bulk proper to be hung at the bed's head, as scarecrows, and some so small that they may be easily concealed. Some I have ground into oval forms to be hung at watches, and some, for the curious, I have set in wedding-rings, that ladies may never want an attestation of their innocence. Some I can produce so sluggish and inert, that they will not act before the third failure; and others so vigorous and animated, that they exert their influence against unlawful wishes, if they have been willingly and deliberately indulged. As it is my practice honestly to tell my customers the properties of my magnets, I can judge by their choice of the delicacy of their sentiments. Many have been contented to spare cost by purchasing only the lowest degree of efficacy, and all have started with terror from those which operate upon the thoughts. One young lady only fitted on a ring of the strongest energy, and declared that she scorned to separate her wishes from her acts, or allow herself to think what she was forbidden to practice.

"I am, &c.,

"HERMETICUS."

No. 200. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1752.

Nemo petit, modicis quæ mittebantur amicis
A Senecâ, quæ Piso bonus, quæ Cotta solebat
Largiri: nempe et titulis et fascibus olim
Major habebatur donandi gloria; solùm
Poscimus ut cœnes civiliter. Hoc face, et esto,
Esto, ut nunc multi, dives tibi, pauper amicis.

JUV. SAT. v. 108.

No man expects, for who so much a sot
Who has the times he lives in so forgot?
What Seneca, what Piso used to send,
To raise, or to support a sinking friend.
Those godlike men, to wanting virtue kind,
Bounty well placed preferr'd, and well design'd,
To all their titles, all that height of power,
Which turns the brains of fools, and fools alone adore.
When your poor client is condemn'd t' attend,
'T is all we ask, receive him as a friend:
Descend to this, and then we ask no more;
Rich to yourself, to all beside be poor. BOWLES.

"TO THE RAMBLER.

"MR. RAMBLER,

"SUCH is the tenderness or infirmity of many minds, that when any affliction oppresses them, they have immediate recourse to lamentation and complaint, which though it can only be allowed reasonable when evils admit of remedy, and then only when addressed to those from whom the remedy is expected, yet seems even in hopeless and incurable distresses to be natural, since those by whom it is not indulged, imagine that they give a proof of extraordinary fortitude by suppressing it.

"I am one of those who, with the Sancho of

Cervantes, leave to higher characters the merit of suffering in silence, and give vent without scruple to any sorrow that swells in my heart. It is therefore to me a severe aggravation of a calamity, when it is such as in the common opinion will not justify the acerbity of exclamation, or support the solemnity of vocal grief. Yet many pains are incident to a man of delicacy which the unfeeling world cannot be persuaded to pity, and which, when they are separated from their peculiar and personal circumstances, will never be considered as important enough to claim attention or deserve redress.

"Of this kind will appear to gross and vulgar apprehensions, the miseries which I endured in a morning visit to Prospero, a man lately raised to wealth by a lucky project, and too much intoxicated by sudden elevation, or too little polished by thought and conversation to enjoy his present fortune with elegance and decency.

"We set out in the world together; and for a long time mutually assisted each other in our exigencies, as either happened to have money or influence beyond his immediate necessities. You know that nothing generally endears men so much as participation of dangers and misfortunes; I therefore always considered Prospero as united with me in the strongest league of kindness, and imagined that our friendship was only to be broken by the hand of death. I felt, at his sudden shoot of success, an honest and disinterested joy; but as I want no part of his superfluities, am not willing to descend from that equality in which we hitherto have lived.

"Our intimacy was regarded by me as a dispensation from ceremonial visits; and it was so long before I saw him at his new house, that he gently complained of my neglect, and obliged me to come

on a day appointed. I kept my promise, but found that the impatience of my friend arose not from any desire to communicate his happiness, but to enjoy his superiority.

" When I told my name at the door, the footman went to see if his master was at home, and, by the tardiness of his return, gave me reason to suspect that time was taken to deliberate. He then informed me that Prospero desired my company, and showed me the staircase carefully secured by mats from the pollution of my feet. The best apartments were ostentatiously set open, that I might have a distant view of the magnificence which I was not permitted to approach ; and my old friend receiving me with all the insolence of condescension at the top of the stairs, conducted me to a back room, where he told me he always breakfasted when he had not great company.

" On the floor where we sat lay a carpet, covered with a cloth, of which, Prospero ordered his servant to lift up a corner, that I might contemplate the brightness of the colours and the elegance of the texture, and asked me whether I had ever seen any thing so fine before ; I did not gratify his folly with any outcries of admiration, but coldly bade the footman let down the cloth.

" We then sat down, and I began to hope that pride was glutted with persecution, when Prospero desired that I would give the servant leave to adjust the cover of my chair, which was slipt a little aside to show the damask ; he informed me that he had bespoke ordinary chairs for common use, but had been disappointed by his tradesman. I put the chair aside with my foot, and drew another so hastily, that I was entreated not to rumple the carpet.

"Breakfast was at last set, and as I was not willing to indulge the peevishness that began to seize me, I commended the tea; Prospero then told me that another time I should taste his finest sort, but that he had only a very small quantity remaining, and reserved it for those whom he thought himself obliged to treat with particular respect.

"While we were conversing upon such subjects as imagination happened to suggest, he frequently digressed into directions to the servant that waited, or made a slight inquiry after the jeweller or silversmith; and once, as I was pursuing an argument with some degree of earnestness, he started from his posture of attention, and ordered, that if Lord Lofty called on him that morning, he should be shown into the best parlour.

"My patience was not yet wholly subdued. I was willing to promote his satisfaction, and therefore observed that the figures on the china were eminently pretty. Prospero had now an opportunity of calling for his Dresden china, which, says he, I always associate with my chased tea-kettle. The cups were brought; I once resolved not to have looked upon them, but my curiosity prevailed. When I had examined them a little, Prospero desired me to set them down, for they who were accustomed only to common dishes, seldom handled china with much care. You will, I hope, commend my philosophy, when I tell you that I did not dash his baubles to the ground.

"He was now so much elevated with his own greatness, that he thought some humility necessary to avert the glance of envy, and therefore told me, with an air of soft composure, that I was not to estimate life by external appearance, that all these shining acquisitions had added little to his happiness,

that he still remembered, with pleasure, the days in which he and I were upon the level, and had often, in the moment of reflection, been doubtful, whether he should lose much by changing his condition for mine.

"I began now to be afraid lest his pride should, by silence and submission, be emboldened to insults that could not easily be borne, and therefore coolly considered, how I should repress it without such bitterness of reproof as I was yet unwilling to use. But he interrupted my meditation, by asking leave to be dressed; and told me, that he had promised to attend some ladies in the park, and, if I was going the same way, would take me in his chariot. I had no inclination to any other favours, and therefore left him without any intention of seeing him again, unless some misfortune should restore his understanding. "I am, &c.,

"ASPER."

Though I am not wholly insensible of the provocations which my correspondent has received, I cannot altogether commend the keenness of his resentment, nor encourage him to persist in his resolution of breaking off all commerce with his old acquaintance. One of the golden precepts of Pythagoras directs, that 'a friend should not be hated for little faults;' and surely he, upon whom nothing worse can be charged, than that he mats his stairs, and covers his carpet, and sets out his finery to show before those whom he does not admit to use it, has yet committed nothing that should exclude him from common degrees of kindness. Such improprieties often proceed rather from stupidity than malice. Those who thus shine only to dazzle, are influenced merely by custom and example, and

neither examine, nor are qualified to examine, the motives of their own practice, or to state the nice limits between elegance and ostentation. They are often innocent of the pain which their vanity produces, and insult others when they have no worse purpose than to please themselves.

He that too much refines his delicacy will always endanger his quiet. Of those with whom nature and virtue oblige us to converse, some are ignorant of the arts of pleasing, and offend when they design to caress; some are negligent, and gratify themselves without regard to the quiet of another; some, perhaps, are malicious, and feel no greater satisfaction in prosperity than that of raising envy and trampling inferiority. But whatever be the motive of insult, it is always best to overlook it: for folly scarcely can deserve resentment, and malice is punished by neglect.

No. 201. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1752.

—Sanctus haberi
Justitiæque tenax factis dictisque mereris?
Agnosco procerem.— JUV. SAT. viii. 24.

Convince the world that you 're devout and true,
Be just in all you say, and all you do;
Whatever be your birth, you 're sure to be
A peer of the first magnitude to me. STEPNEY.

Boyle has observed, that the excellency of manufactures, and the facility of labour, would be

much promoted, if the various expedients and contrivances which lie concealed in private hands, were, by reciprocal communications, made generally known; for there are few operations that are not performed by one or other with some peculiar advantages, which though singly of little importance, would, by conjunction and concurrence, open new inlets to knowledge, and give new powers to diligence.

There are, in like manner, several moral excellences distributed among the different classes of a community. It was said by Cujacius, that he never read more than one book by which he was not instructed; and he that shall inquire after virtue, with ardour and attention, will seldom find a man by whose example or sentiments he may not be improved.

Every profession has some essential and appropriate virtue, without which there can be no hope of honour or success, and which, as it is more or less cultivated, confers within its sphere of activity different degrees of merit and reputation. As the astrologers range the subdivisions of mankind under the planets which they suppose to influence their lives, the moralist may distribute them according to the virtues which they necessarily practise, and consider them as distinguished by prudence or fortitude, diligence or patience.

So much are the modes of excellence settled by time and place, that men may be heard boasting in one street of that which they would anxiously conceal in another. The grounds of scorn and esteem, the topics of praise and satire, are varied according to the several virtues or vices which the course of life has disposed men to admire or abhor; but he who is solicitous for his own improvement, must not

be limited by local reputation, but select from every tribe of mortals their characteristical virtues, and constellate in himself the scattered graces which shine single in other men.

The chief praise to which a trader aspires is that of punctuality, or an exact and rigorous observance of commercial engagements; nor is there any vice of which he so much dreads the imputation, as of negligence and instability. This is a quality which the interest of mankind requires to be diffused through all the ranks of life, but which many seem to consider as a vulgar and ignoble virtue, below the ambition of greatness or attention of wit, scarcely requisite among men of gayety and spirit, and sold at its highest rate when it is sacrificed to a frolic or a jest.

Every man has daily occasion to remark what vexations arise from this privilege of deceiving one another. The active and vivacious have so long disdained the restraints of truth, that promises and appointments have lost their cogency, and both parties neglect their stipulations, because each concludes that they will be broken by the other.

Negligence is first admitted in small affairs, and strengthened by petty indulgences. He that is not yet hardened by custom, ventures not on the violation of important engagements, but thinks himself bound by his word in cases of property or danger, though he allows himself to forget at what time he is to meet ladies in the park, or at what tavern his friends are expecting him.

This laxity of honour would be more tolerable, if it could be restrained to the play-house, the ball-room, or the card-table; yet even there it is sufficiently troublesome, and darkens those moments with expectation, suspense, and resentment, which

are set aside for pleasure, and from which we naturally hope for unmingled enjoyment and total relaxation. But he that suffers the slightest breach in his morality can seldom tell what shall enter it, or how wide it shall be made; when a passage is open, the influx of corruption is every moment wearing down opposition, and, by slow degrees, deluges the heart.

Aliger entered the world a youth of lively imagination, extensive views, and untainted principles. His curiosity incited him to range from place to place, and try all the varieties of conversation; his elegance of address and fertility of ideas, gained him friends wherever he appeared; or at least he found the general kindness of reception always shown to a young man whose birth and fortune give him a claim to notice, and who has neither by vice nor folly destroyed his privileges. Aliger was pleased with this general smile of mankind, and was industrious to preserve it by compliance and officiousness, but did not suffer his desire of pleasing to vitiate his integrity. It was his established maxim, that a promise is never to be broken; nor was it without long reluctance that he once suffered himself to be drawn away from a festal engagement by the importunity of another company.

He spent the evening, as is usual, in the rudiments of vice, in perturbation and imperfect enjoyment, and met his disappointed friends in the morning, with confusion and excuses. His companions, not accustomed to such scrupulous anxiety, laughed at his uneasiness, compounded the offence for a bottle, gave him courage to break his word again, and again levied the penalty. He ventured the same experiment upon another society, and found them equally ready to consider it as a venial

fault, always incident to a man of quickness and gayety; till, by degrees, he began to think himself at liberty to follow the last invitation, and was no longer shocked at the turpitude of falsehood. He made no difficulty to promise his presence at distant places, and if listlessness happened to creep upon him, would sit at home with great tranquillity, and has often sunk to sleep in a chair, while he held ten tables in continual expectations of his entrance.

It was so pleasant to live in perpetual vacancy, that he soon dismissed his attention as an useless incumbrance, and resigned himself to carelessness and dissipation, without any regard to the future or the past, or any other motive of action than the impulse of a sudden desire, or the attraction of immediate pleasure. The absent were immediately forgotten, and the hopes or fears felt by others, had no influence upon his conduct. He was in speculation completely just, but never kept his promise to a creditor; he was benevolent, but always deceived those friends whom he undertook to patronize or assist; he was prudent, but suffered his affairs to be embarrassed for want of regulating his accounts at stated times. He courted a young lady, and when the settlements were drawn, took a ramble into the country on the day appointed to sign them. He resolved to travel, and sent his chests on shipboard, but delayed to follow them till he lost his passage. He was summoned as an evidence in a cause of great importance, and loitered on the way till the trial was past. It is said, that when he had, with great expense, formed an interest in a borough, his opponent contrived, by some agents, who knew his temper, to lure him away on the day of election.

His benevolence draws him into the commission

of a thousand crimes, which others less kind or civil would escape. His courtesy invites application; his promises produce dependence; he has his pockets filled with petitions, which he intends some time to deliver and enforce, and his table covered with letters of request, with which he purposes to comply; but time slips imperceptibly away, while he is either idle or busy; his friends lose their opportunities, and charge upon him their miscarriages and calamities.

This character, however contemptible, is not peculiar to Aliger. They whose activity of imagination is often shifting the scenes of expectation, are frequently subject to such sallies of caprice as make all their actions fortuitous, destroy the value of their friendship, obstruct the efficacy of their virtues, and set them below the meanest of those that persist in their resolutions, execute what they design, and perform what they have promised.

No. 202. SATURDAY FEBRUARY 22, 1752.

Πρὸς ἅπαντα δειλὸς ἐστὶν ὁ πένης πράγματα,
Καὶ πάντας αὐτοῦ καταφρονεῖν ὑπολαμβάνει.
Ὁ δὲ μετρίως πράττων περισκελέστερον
Ἅπαντά τ' ἀννιαρὰ, Δαμπρία, φέρει.

CALLIMACHUS.

From no affliction is the poor exempt,
He thinks each eye surveys him with contempt;
Unmanly poverty subdues the heart,
Cankers each wound, and sharpens every dart.

F. LEWIS.

Among those who have endeavoured to promote learning and rectify judgment, it has been long customary to complain of the abuse of words, which are often admitted to signify things so different, that instead of assisting the understanding as vehicles of knowledge, they produce error, dissension, and perplexity, because what is affirmed in one sense, is received in another.

If this ambiguity sometimes embarrasses the most solemn controversies, and obscures the demonstrations of science, it may well be expected to infest the pompous periods of declaimers, whose purpose is often only to amuse with fallacies, and change the colours of truth and falsehood; or the musical compositions of poets, whose style is professedly figurative, and whose art is imagined to consist in distorting words from their original meaning.

There are few words of which the reader believes himself better to know the import than of poverty;

yet whoever studies either the poets or philosophers, will find such an account of the condition expressed by that term as his experience or observation will not easily discover to be true. Instead of the meanness, distress, complaint, anxiety, and dependence which have hitherto been combined in his ideas of poverty, he will read of content, innocence, and cheerfulness, of health and safety, tranquillity and freedom; of pleasures not known but to men unincumbered with possessions; and of sleep that sheds his balsamic anodynes only on the cottage. Such are the blessings to be obtained by the resignation of riches, that kings might descend from their thrones, and generals retire from a triumph, only to slumber undisturbed in the elysium of poverty.

If these authors do not deceive us, nothing can be more absurd than that perpetual contest for wealth which keeps the world in commotion; nor any complaints more justly censured than those which proceed from want of the gifts of fortune, which we are taught by the great masters of moral wisdom to consider as golden shackles, by which the wearer is at once disabled and adorned; as luscious poisons, which may for a time please the palate, but soon betray their malignity by languor and by pain.

It is the great privilege of poverty to be happy unenvied, to be healthful without physic, and secure without a guard; to obtain from the bounty of nature, what the great and wealthy are compelled to procure by the help of artists and attendants, of flatterers and spies.

But it will be found, upon a nearer view, that they who extol the happiness of poverty, do not mean the same state with those who deplore its

miseries. Poets have their imaginations filled with ideas of magnificence; and being accustomed to contemplate the downfall of empires, or to contrive forms of lamentation for monarchs in distress, rank all the classes of mankind in a state of poverty, who make no approaches to the dignity of crowns. To be poor, in the epic language, is only not to command the wealth of nations, nor to have fleets and armies in pay.

Vanity has, perhaps, contributed to this impropriety of style. He that wishes to become a philosopher at a cheap rate, easily gratifies his ambition by submitting to poverty when he does not feel it, and by boasting his contempt of riches when he has already more than he enjoys. He who would show the extent of his views and grandeur of his conceptions, or discover his acquaintance with splendour and magnificence, may talk, like Cowley, of an humble station and quiet obscurity, of the paucity of nature's wants, and the inconveniences of superfluity, and at last, like him, limit his desires to five hundred pounds a-year; a fortune, indeed, not exuberant when we compare it with the expenses of pride and luxury, but to which it little becomes a philosopher to affix the name of poverty, since no man can, with any propriety, be termed poor, who does not see the greater part of mankind richer than himself.

As little is the general condition of human life understood by the panegyrists and historians who amuse us with accounts of the poverty of heroes and sages. Riches are of no value in themselves, their use is discovered only in that which they procure. They are not coveted, unless by narrow understandings, which confound the means with the end, but for the sake of power, influence, and esteem;

or, by some of less elevated and refined sentiments, as necessary to sensual enjoyment.

The pleasures of luxury, many have, without uncommon virtue, been able to despise, even when affluence and idleness have concurred to tempt them; and therefore he who feels nothing from indigence but the want of gratifications which he could not in any other condition make consistent with innocence, has given no proof of eminent patience. Esteem and influence every man desires, but they are equally pleasing and equally valuable, by whatever means they are obtained; and whoever has found the art of securing them without the help of money, ought, in reality, to be accounted rich, since he has all that riches can purchase to a wise man. Cincinnatus, though he lived upon a few acres, cultivated by his own hand, was sufficiently removed from all the evils generally comprehended under the name of poverty, when his reputation was such that the voice of his country called him from his farm to take absolute command into his hand; nor was Diogenes much mortified by his residence in a tub, where he was honoured with the visit of Alexander the Great.

The same fallacy has conciliated veneration to the religious orders. When we behold a man abdicating the hope of terrestrial possessions, and precluding himself, by an irrevocable vow, from the pursuit and acquisition of all that his fellow-beings consider as worthy of wishes and endeavours, we are immediately struck with the purity, abstraction, and firmness of his mind, and regard him as wholly employed in securing the interests of futurity, and devoid of any other care than to gain, at whatever price, the surest passage to eternal rest.

Yet, what can the votary be justly said to have

lost of his present happiness? If he resides in a convent, he converses only with men whose condition is the same with his own; he has, from the munificence of the founder, all the necessaries of life, and is safe from that destitution, which Hooker declares to be 'such an impediment to virtue, as, till it be removed, suffereth not the mind of man to admit any other care.' All temptations to envy and competition are shut out from his retreat; he is not pained with the sight of unattainable dignity, nor insulted with the bluster of insolence, or the smile of forced familiarity. If he wanders abroad, the sanctity of his character amply compensates all other distinctions; he is seldom seen but with reverence, nor heard but with submission.

It has been remarked that death, though often defied in the field, seldom fails to terrify when it approaches the bed of sickness in its natural horror; so poverty may easily be endured, while associated with dignity and reputation, but will always be shunned and dreaded, when it is accompanied with ignominy and contempt.

No. 203. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1752.

Cum volet illa dies, quæ nil nisi corporis hujus
Jus habet, incerti spatium mihi finiat ævi.
OVID. MET. XV. 873.

Come soon or late, death's undetermined day,
This mortal being only can decay. WELSTED.

It seems to be the fate of man to seek all his consolations in futurity. The time present is seldom able to fill desire or imagination with immediate enjoyment, and we are forced to supply its deficiencies by recollection or anticipation.

Every one has so often detected the fallaciousness of hope, and the inconvenience of teaching himself to expect what a thousand accidents may preclude, that, when time has abated the confidence with which youth rushes out to take possession of the world, we endeavour, or wish, to find entertainment in the review of life, and to repose upon real facts and certain experience. This is, perhaps, one reason among many, why age delights in narratives.

But so full is the world of calamity, that every source of pleasure is polluted, and every retirement of tranquillity disturbed. When time has supplied us with events sufficient to employ our thoughts, it has mingled them with so many disasters, that we shrink from their remembrance, dread their intrusion upon our minds, and fly from them as from enemies that pursue us with torture.

No man past the middle point of life can sit down

to feast upon the pleasures of youth without finding the banquet imbittered by the cup of sorrow; he may revive lucky accidents and pleasing extravagances; many days of harmless frolic, or nights of honest festivity, will perhaps, recur; or, if he has been engaged in scenes of action, and acquainted with affairs of difficulty and vicissitudes of fortune, he may enjoy the nobler pleasure of looking back upon distress firmly supported, dangers resolutely encountered, and opposition artfully defeated. Æneas properly comforts his companions, when after the horrors of a storm they have landed on an unknown and desolate country, with the hope that their miseries will be at some distant time recounted with delight. There are few higher gratifications than that of reflection on surmounted evils, when they were not incurred nor protracted by our fault, and neither reproach us with cowardice nor guilt.

But this felicity is almost always abated by the reflection, that they, with whom we should be most pleased to share it, are now in the grave. A few years make such havoc in human generations, that we soon see ourselves deprived of those with whom we entered the world, and whom the participation of pleasures or fatigues had endeared to our remembrance. The man of enterprise recounts his adventures and expedients, but is forced, at the close of the relation, to pay a sigh to the names of those that contributed to his success; he that passes his life among the gayer part of mankind has his remembrance stored with remarks and repartees of wits, whose sprightliness and merriment are now lost in perpetual silence; the trader, whose industry has supplied the want of inheritance, repines in solitary plenty at the absence of companions, with whom he had planned out amusements for his latter years;

and the scholar, whose merit, after a long series of efforts, raises him from obscurity, looks round in vain from his exaltation for his old friends or enemies, whose applause or mortification would heighten his triumph.

Among Martial's requisites to happiness is, *Res non parta labore, sed relicta*, 'an estate not gained by industry, but left by inheritance.' It is necessary to the completion of every good, that it be timely obtained; for whatever comes at the close of life, will come too late to give much delight; yet all human happiness has its defects. Of what we do not gain for ourselves we have only a faint and imperfect fruition, because we cannot compare the difference between want and possession, or at least can derive from it no conviction of our own abilities, nor any increase of self-esteem; what we acquire by bravery or science, by mental or corporeal diligence, comes at last when we cannot communicate, and therefore cannot enjoy it.

Thus every period of life is obliged to borrow its happiness from the time to come. In youth we have nothing past to entertain us, and in age we derive little from retrospect but hopeless sorrow. Yet the future, likewise, has its limits, which the imagination dreads to approach, but which we see to be not far distant. The loss of our friends and companions impresses hourly upon us the necessity of our own departure; we know that the schemes of man are quickly at an end, that we must soon lie down in the grave with the forgotten multitudes of former ages, and yield our place to others, who, like us, shall be driven awhile by hope or fear, about the surface of the earth, and then like us be lost in the shades of death.

Beyond this termination of our material existence,

we are therefore obliged to extend our hopes; and almost every man indulges his imagination with something, which is not to happen till he has changed his manner of being; some amuse themselves with entails and settlements, provide for the perpetuation of families and honours, or contrive to obviate the dissipation of the fortunes which it has been their business to accumulate; others, more refined or exalted, congratulate their own hearts upon the future extent of their reputation, the reverence of distant nations, and the gratitude of unprejudiced posterity.

They whose souls are so chained down to coffers and tenements, that they cannot conceive a state in which they shall look upon them with less solicitude, are seldom attentive or flexible to arguments; but the votaries of fame are capable of reflection, and, therefore, may be called to reconsider the probability of their expectations.

Whether to be remembered in remote times be worthy of a wise man's wish, has not yet been satisfactorily decided; and, indeed, to be long remembered, can happen to so small a number, that the bulk of mankind has very little interest in the question. There is never room in the world for more than a certain quantity or measure of renown. The necessary business of life, the immediate pleasures or pains of every condition, leave us not leisure beyond a fixed proportion for contemplations which do not forcibly influence our present welfare. When this vacuity is filled, no characters can be admitted into the circulation of fame, but by occupying the place of some that must be thrust into oblivion. The eye of the mind, like that of the body, can only extend its view to new objects, by losing sight of those which are now before it.

Reputation is, therefore, a meteor which blazes a while and disappears forever; and if we except a few transcendant and invincible names, which no revolution of opinion or length of time is able to suppress; all those that engage our thoughts, or diversify our conversation, are every moment hasting to obscurity, as new favourites are adopted by fashion.

It is not therefore from this world that any ray of comfort can proceed, to cheer the gloom of the last hour. But futurity has still its prospects; there is yet happiness in reserve, which, if we transfer our attention to it, will support us in the pains of disease, and the languor of decay. This happiness we may expect with confidence, because it is out of the power of chance, and may be attained by all that sincerely desire and earnestly pursue it. On this, therefore, every mind ought finally to rest. Hope is the chief blessing of man, and that hope only is rational, of which we are certain that it cannot deceive us.

No. 204. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 1752.

Nemo tam divos habuit faventes,
Crastinum ut possit sibi polliceri. SENECA.

Of Heaven's protection who can be
So confident, to utter this—?
To-morrow I will spend in bliss. F. LEWIS.

SEGED, lord of Ethiopia, to the inhabitants of the world: To the sons of presumption, humility, and fear; and to the daughters of sorrow, content, and acquiescence.

Thus, in the twenty-seventh year of his reign, spoke Seged, the monarch of forty nations, the distributer of the waters of the Nile: 'At length, Seged, thy toils are at an end; thou hast reconciled disaffection, thou hast suppressed rebellion, thou hast pacified the jealousies of thy courtiers, thou hast chased war from thy confines, and erected fortresses in the lands of thy enemies. All who have offended thee, tremble in thy presence, and wherever thy voice is heard, it is obeyed. Thy throne is surrounded by armies, numerous as the locusts of the summer, and resistless as the blasts of pestilence. Thy magazines are stored with ammunition, thy treasuries overflow with the tribute of conquered kingdoms. Plenty waves upon thy fields, and opulence glitters in thy cities. Thy nod is as the earthquake that shakes the mountains, and thy smile as the dawn of the vernal day. In thy hand is the strength of thousands, and thy health is the health of mil-

lions. Thy palace is gladdened by the song of praise, and thy path perfumed by the breath of benediction. Thy subjects gaze upon thy greatness, and think of danger or misery no more. Why, Seged, wilt not thou partake the blessings thou bestowest? Why shouldst thou only forbear to rejoice in this general felicity? Why should thy face be clouded with anxiety, when the meanest of those who call thee sovereign, gives the day to festivity, and the night to peace? At length, Seged, reflect and be wise. What is the gift of conquest but safety, why are riches collected but to purchase happiness?'

Seged then ordered the house of pleasure, built in an island of the lake Dambia, to be prepared for his reception. 'I will retire,' says he, 'for ten days from tumult and care, from counsels and decrees. Long quiet is not the lot of the governors of nations, but a cessation of ten days cannot be denied me. This short interval of happiness may surely be secured from the interruption of fear or perplexity, sorrow or disappointment. I will exclude all trouble from my abode, and remove from my thoughts whatever may confuse the harmony of the concert, or abate the sweetness of the banquet. I will fill the whole capacity of my soul with enjoyment, and try what it is to live without a wish unsatisfied.'

In a few days the orders were performed, and Seged hasted to the palace of Dambia, which stood in an island cultivated only for pleasure, planted with every flower that spreads its colours to the sun, and every shrub that sheds fragrance in the air. In one part of this extensive garden, were open walks for excursions in the morning; in another, thick groves, and silent arbours, and bubbling fountains for repose at noon. All that could solace the

sense or flatter the fancy, all that industry could extort from nature or wealth furnish to art, all that conquest could seize, or beneficence attract, was collected together, and every perception of delight was excited and gratified.

Into this delicious region Seged summoned all the persons of his court, who seemed eminently qualified to receive or communicate pleasure. His call was readily obeyed; the young, the fair, the vivacious, and the witty, were all in haste to be sated with felicity. They sailed jocund over the lake, which seemed to smooth its surface before them; their passage was cheered with music, and their hearts dilated with expectation.

Seged landing here with his band of pleasure, determined from that hour to break off all acquaintance with discontent, to give his heart for ten days to ease and jollity, and then fall back to the common state of man, and suffer his life to be diversified, as before, with joy and sorrow.

He immediately entered his chamber, to consider where he should begin his circle of happiness. He had all the artists of delight before him, but knew not whom to call, since he could not enjoy one, but by delaying the performance of another. He chose and rejected, he resolved and changed his resolution, till his faculties were harassed, and his thoughts confused; then returned to the apartment where his presence was expected, with languid eyes and clouded countenance, and spread the infection of uneasiness over the whole assembly. He observed their depression, and was offended, for he found his vexation increased by those whom he expected to dissipate and relieve it. He retired again to his private chamber, and sought for consolation in his own mind; one thought flowed in upon another;

a long succession of images seized his attention; the moments crept imperceptibly away through the gloom of pensiveness, till, having recovered his tranquillity, he lifted up his head and saw the lake brightened by the setting sun. 'Such,' said Seged, sighing, 'is the longest day of human existence; before we have learned to use it, we find it at an end.'

The regret which he felt for the loss of so great a part of his first day, took from him all disposition to enjoy the evening; and after having endeavored, for the sake of his attendants, to force an air of gayety, and excite that mirth which he could not share, he resolved to refer his hopes till the next morning, and lay down to partake, with the slaves of labour and poverty, the blessing of sleep.

He rose early the second morning, and resolved now to be happy. He therefore fixed upon the gate of the palace an edict, importing, that whoever, during nine days, should appear in the presence of the king with dejected countenance, or utter any expression of discontent or sorrow, should be driven forever from the palace of Dambia.

This edict was immediately made known in every chamber of the court and bower of the gardens. Mirth was frighted away, and they who were before dancing in the lawns, or singing in the shades, were at once engaged in the care of regulating their looks, that Seged might find his will punctually obeyed, and see none among them liable to banishment.

Seged now met every face settled in a smile; but a smile that betrayed solicitude, timidity, and constraint. He accosted his favourites with familiarity and softness; but they durst not speak without premeditation, lest they should be convicted of discon-

tent or sorrow. He proposed diversions to which no objection was made, because objection would have implied uneasiness; but they were regarded with indifference by the courtiers, who had no other desire than to signalize themselves by clamorous exultation. He offered various topics of conversation, but obtained only forced jests and laborious laughter, and, after many attempts to animate his train to confidence and alacrity, was obliged to confess to himself the impotence of command, and resign another day to grief and disappointment.

He at last relieved his companions from their terrors, and shut himself up in his chamber to ascertain, by different measures, the felicity of the succeeding days. At length he threw himself on the bed, and closed his eyes, but imagined, in his sleep, that his palace and gardens were overwhelmed by an inundation, and waked with all the terrors of a man struggling in the water. He composed himself again to rest, but was affrighted by an imaginary irruption into his kingdom, and striving, as is usual in dreams, without ability to move, fancied himself betrayed to his enemies, and again started up with horror and indignation.

It was now day, and fear was so strongly impressed on his mind, that he could sleep no more. He rose, but his thoughts were filled with the deluge and invasion, nor was he able to disengage his attention, or mingle with vacancy and ease in any amusement. At length his perturbation gave way to reason, and he resolved no longer to be harassed by visionary miseries; but before this resolution could be completed, half the day had elapsed; he felt a new conviction of the uncertainty of human schemes, and could not forbear to bewail the weakness of that being, whose quiet was to be interrupted

by vapours of the fancy. Having been first disturbed by a dream, he afterwards grieved that a dream could disturb him. He at last discovered that his terrors and grief were equally vain, and that, to lose the present in lamenting the past, was voluntarily to protract a melancholy vision. The third day was now declining, and Seged again resolved to be happy on the morrow.

No. 205. TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 1752.

—Volat ambiguis
Mobilis alis hora, nec ulli
Præstat velox fortuna fidem. SENECA.

On fickle wings the minutes haste,
And fortune's favours never last. F. LEWIS.

On the fourth morning Seged rose early, refreshed with sleep, vigorous with health, and eager with expectation. He entered the garden, attended by the princes and ladies of his court, and seeing nothing about him but airy cheerfulness, began to say to his heart: 'This day shall be a day of pleasure.' The sun played upon the water, the birds warbled in the groves, and the gales quivered among the branches. He roved from walk to walk as chance directed him, and sometimes listened to the songs, sometimes mingled with the dancers, sometimes let loose his imagination in flights of merriment; and sometimes uttered grave reflections and

sententious maxims, and feasted on the admiration with which they were received.

Thus the day rolled on, without any accident of vexation, or intrusion of melancholy thoughts. All that beheld him caught gladness from his looks, and the sigh of happiness conferred by himself filled his heart with satisfaction; but having passed three hours in this harmless luxury, he was alarmed on a sudden by an universal scream among the women, and turning back, saw the whole assembly flying in confusion. A young crocodile had risen out of the lake, and was ranging the garden in wantonness or hunger. Seged beheld him with indignation, as a disturber of his felicity, and chased him back into the lake, but could not persuade his retinue to stay, or free their hearts from the terror which had seized upon them. The princesses inclosed themselves in the palace, and could yet scarcely believe themselves in safety. Every attention was fixed upon the late danger and escape, and no mind was any longer at leisure for gay sallies or careless prattle.

Seged had now no other employment than to contemplate the innumerable casualties which lie in ambush on every side to intercept the happiness of man, and break in upon the hour of delight and tranquillity. He had, however, the consolation of thinking, that he had not been now disappointed by his own fault, and that the accident which had blasted the hopes of the day, might easily be prevented by future caution.

That he might provide for the pleasure of the next morning, he resolved to repeal his penal edict, since he had already found that discontent and melancholy were not to be frighted away by the threats of authority, and that pleasure would only reside where she was exempted from control. He there-

fore invited all the companions of his retreat to unbounded pleasantry, by proposing prizes for those who should, on the following day, distinguish themselves by any festive performances; the tables of the antechamber were covered with gold and pearls, and robes and garlands decreed the rewards of those who could refine elegance or heighten pleasure.

At this display of riches every eye immediately sparkled, and every tongue was busied in celebrating the bounty and magnificence of the emperor. But when Seged entered, in hopes of uncommon entertainment from universal emulation, he found that any passion too strongly agitated, puts an end to that tranquillity which is necessary to mirth, and that the mind that is to be moved by the gentle ventilations of gayety, must be first smoothed by a total calm. Whatever we ardently wish to gain, we must in the same degree be afraid to lose, and fear and pleasure cannot dwell together.

All was now care and solicitude. Nothing was done or spoken, but with so visible an endeavour at perfection, as always failed to delight, though it sometimes forced admiration; and Seged could not but observe, with sorrow, that his prizes had more influence than himself. As the evening approached, the contest grew more earnest, and those who were forced to allow themselves excelled, began to discover the malignity of defeat, first by angry glances, and at last by contemptuous murmurs. Seged likewise shared the anxiety of the day, for considering himself as obliged to distribute with exact justice the prizes which had been so zealously sought, he durst never remit his attention, but passed his time upon the rack of doubt in balancing different kinds of merit, and adjusting the claims of all the competitors.

At last, knowing that no exactness could satisfy those whose hopes he should disappoint, and thinking that on a day set apart for happiness, it would be cruel to oppress any heart with sorrow, he declared that all had pleased him alike, and dismissed all with presents of equal value.

Seged soon saw that his caution had not been able to avoid offence. They who had believed themselves secure of the highest prizes, were not pleased to be levelled with the crowd; and though, by the liberality of the king, they received more than his promise had entitled them to expect, they departed unsatisfied, because they were honoured with no distinction, and wanted an opportunity to triumph in the mortification of their opponents. 'Behold here,' said Seged, 'the condition of him who places his happiness in the happiness of others.' He then retired to meditate, and, while the courtiers were repining at his distributions, saw the fifth sun go down in discontent.

The next dawn renewed his resolution to be happy. But having learned how little he could effect by settled schemes or preparatory measures, he thought it best to give up one day entirely to chance, and left every one to please and be pleased his own way.

This relaxation of regularity diffused a general complacence through the whole court, and the emperor imagined that he had at last found the secret of obtaining an interval of felicity. But as he was roving in this careless assembly with equal carelessness, he overheard one of his courtiers in a close arbour murmuring alone: 'What merit has Seged above us, that we should thus fear and obey him; a man, whom, whatever he may have formerly performed, his luxury now shows to have the same

weakness with ourselves.' This charge affected him the more, as it was uttered by one whom he had always observed among the most abject of his flatterers. At first, his indignation prompted him to severity; but reflecting that what was spoken, without intention to be heard, was to be considered as only thought, and was, perhaps, but the sudden burst of casual and temporary vexation, he invented some decent pretence to send him away, that his retreat might not be tainted with the breath of envy; and after the struggle of deliberation was past, and all desire of revenge utterly suppressed, passed the evening not only with tranquillity, but triumph, though none but himself was conscious of the victory.

The remembrance of this clemency cheered the beginning of the seventh day, and nothing happened to disturb the pleasure of Seged, till, looking on the tree that shaded him, he recollected that under a tree of the same kind he had passed the night after his defeat in the kingdom of Goiama. The reflection on his loss, his dishonour, and the miseries which his subjects suffered from the invader, filled him with sadness. At last he shook off the weight of sorrow, and began to solace himself with his usual pleasures, when his tranquillity was again disturbed by jealousies which the late contest for the prizes had produced, and which, having in vain tried to pacify them by persuasion, he was forced to silence by command.

On the eighth morning Seged was awakened early by an unusual hurry in the apartments, and inquiring the cause, was told that the princess Balkis was seized with sickness. He rose, and calling the physicians, found that they had little hope of her recovery. Here was an end of jollity; all his

thoughts were now upon his daughter, whose eyes he closed on the tenth day.

Such were the days which Seged of Ethiopia had appropriated to a short respiration from the fatigues of war and the cares of government. This narrative he has bequeathed to future generations, that no man hereafter may presume to say: 'This day shall be a day of happiness.'

No. 206. SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 1752.

—Propositi nondum pudet, atque eadem est mens,
Ut bona summa putes, aliená vivere quadrâ.

JUV. SAT. V.

But harden'd by affronts, and still the same,
Lost to all sense of honour and of fame,
Thou yet can'st love to haunt the great man's board,
And think no supper good but with a lord.

BOWLES.

When Diogenes was once asked what kind of wine he liked best? he answered, 'That which is drunk at the cost of others.'

Though the character of Diogenes has never excited any general zeal of imitation, there are many who resemble him in his taste of wine; many who are frugal, though not abstemious; whose appetites, though too powerful for reason, are kept under restraint by avarice; and to whom all delicacies lose their flavour, when they cannot be obtained but at their own expense.

Nothing produces more singularity of manners and inconstancy of life, than the conflict of opposite vices in the same mind. He that uniformly pursues any purpose, whether good or bad, has a settled principle of action; and as he may always find associates who are travelling the same way, is countenanced by example, and sheltered in the multitude; but a man, actuated at once by different desires, must move in a direction peculiar to himself, and suffer that reproach which we are naturally inclined to bestow on those who deviate from the rest of the world, even without inquiring whether they are worse or better.

Yet this conflict of desires sometimes produces wonderful efforts. To riot in far-fetched dishes, or surfeit with unexhausted variety, and yet practise the most rigid economy, is surely an art which may justly draw the eyes of mankind upon them whose industry or judgment has enabled them to attain it. To him, indeed, who is content to break open the chests, or mortgage the manors of his ancestors, that he may hire the ministers of excess at the highest price, gluttony is an easy science; yet we often hear the votaries of luxury boasting of the elegance which they owe to the taste of others, relating, with rapture, the succession of dishes with which their cooks and caterers supply them; and expecting their share of praise with the discoverers of arts and the civilizers of nations. But to shorten the way to convivial happiness, by eating without cost, is a secret hitherto in few hands, but which certainly deserves the curiosity of those whose principal enjoyments is their dinner, and who see the sun rise with no other hope than that they shall fill their bellies before it sets.

Of them that have within my knowledge attempt-

ed this scheme of happiness, the greater part have been immediately obliged to desist; and some, whom their first attempts flattered with success, were reduced by degrees to a few tables, from which they were at last chased to make way for others; and having long habituated themselves to superfluous plenty, growled away their latter years in discontented competence.

None enter the regions of luxury with higher expectations than men of wit, who imagine, that they shall never want a welcome to that company whose ideas they can enlarge, or whose imaginations they can elevate, and believe themselves able to pay for their wine with the mirth which it qualifies them to produce. Full of this opinion, they crowd with little invitation, wherever the smell of a feast allures them, but are seldom encouraged to repeat their visits, being dreaded by the pert as rivals, and hated by the dull as disturbers of the company.

No man has been so happy in gaining and keeping the privilege of living at luxurious houses as Gulosulus, who, after thirty years of continual revelry, has now established, by uncontroverted prescription, his claim to partake of every entertainment, and whose presence they who aspire to the praise of a sumptuous table are careful to procure on a day of importance, by sending the invitation a fortnight before.

Gulosulus entered the world without any eminent degree of merit; but was careful to frequent houses where persons of rank resorted. By being often seen, he became in time known; and from sitting in the same room, was suffered to mix in idle conversation, or assisted to fill up a vacant hour, when better amusement was not readily to be had. From the coffee-house he was sometimes taken away to

dinner; and as no man refuses the acquaintance of him whom he sees admitted to familiarity by others of equal dignity, when he had been met at a few tables, he with less difficulty found the way to more, till at last he was regularly expected to appear wherever preparations are made for a feast, within the circuit of his acquaintance.

When he was thus by accident initiated in luxury, he felt in himself no inclination to retire from a life of so much pleasure, and therefore very seriously considered how he might continue it. Great qualities, or uncommon accomplishments, he did not find necessary; for he had already seen that merit rather enforces respect than attracts fondness; and as he thought no folly greater than that of losing a dinner for any other gratification, he often congratulated himself, that he had none of that disgusting excellence which impresses awe upon greatness, and condemns its possessors to the society of those who are wise or brave, and indigent as themselves.

Gulosulus having never allotted much of his time to books or meditation, had no opinion in philosophy or politics, and was not in danger of injuring his interest by dogmatical positions or violent contradiction. If a dispute arose, he took care to listen with earnest attention; and when either speaker grew vehement and loud, turned towards him with eager quickness, and uttered a short phrase of admiration, as if surprised by such cogency of argument as he had never known before. By this silent concession, he generally preserved in either controvertist such a conviction of his own superiority, as inclined him rather to pity than irritate his adversary, and prevented those outrages which are sometimes produced by the rage of defeat, or petulance of triumph.

Gulosulus was never embarrassed, but when he was required to declare his sentiments before he had been able to discover to which side the master of the house inclined, for it was his invariable rule to adopt the notions of those that invited him.

It will sometimes happen that the insolence of wealth breaks into contemptuousness, or the turbulence of wine requires a vent; and Gulosulus seldom fails of being singled out on such emergencies, as one on whom any experiment of ribaldry may be safely tried. Sometimes his lordship finds himself inclined to exhibit a specimen of raillery for the diversion of his guests, and Gulosulus always supplies him with a subject of merriment. But he has learned to consider rudeness and indignities as familiarities that entitle him to greater freedom; he comforts himself, that those who treat and insult him pay for their laughter, and that he keeps his money while they enjoy their jest.

His chief policy consists in selecting some dish from every course, and recommending it to the company, with an air so decisive, that no one ventures to contradict him. By this practice he acquires at a feast a kind of dictatorial authority; his taste becomes the standard of pickles and seasoning, and he is venerated by the professors of epicurism, as the only man who understands the niceties of cookery.

Whenever a new sauce is imported, or any innovation made in the culinary system, he procures the earliest intelligence, and the most authentic receipt; and by communicating his knowledge, under proper injunctions of secrecy, gains a right of tasting his own dish whenever it is prepared, that he may tell whether his directions have been fully understood.

By this method of life Gulosulus has so impressed

on his imagination the dignity of feasting, that he has no other topic of talk or subject of meditation. His calendar is a bill of fare; he measures the year by successive dainties. The only commonplaces of his memory are his meals; and if you ask him at what time an event happened, he considers whether he heard it after a dinner of turbot or venison. He knows, indeed, that those who value themselves upon sense, learning, or piety, speak of him with contempt; but he considers them as wretches envious or ignorant, who do not know his happiness, or wish to supplant him; and declares to his friends, that he is fully satisfied with his own conduct, since he has fed every day on twenty dishes, and yet doubled his estate.

No. 207. TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 1752.

Solve senescentem maturè sanus equum, ne
Peccet ad extremum ridendus.—

HOR. EPIST. i. 1. 8.

The voice of reason cries with winning force,
Loose from the rapid car your aged horse,
Lest, in the race derided, left behind,
He drag his jaded limbs, and burst his wind. FRANCIS.

SUCH is the emptiness of human enjoyment, that we are always impatient of the present. Attainment is followed by neglect, and possession by disgust; and the malicious remark of the Greek epigrammatist, on marriage, may be applied to every

other course of life, that its two days of happiness are the first and the last.

Few moments are more pleasing than those in which the mind is concerting measures for a new undertaking. From the first hint that wakens the fancy, till the hour of actual execution, all is improvement and progress, triumph and felicity. Every hour brings additions to the original scheme, suggests some new expedient to secure success, or discovers consequential advantages not hitherto foreseen. While preparations are made, and materials accumulated, day glides after day through elysian prospects, and the heart dances to the song of hope.

Such is the pleasure of projecting, that many content themselves with a succession of visionary schemes, and wear out their allotted time in the calm amusement of contriving what they never attempt or hope to execute.

Others, not able to feast their imagination with pure ideas, advance somewhat nearer to the grossness of action, with great diligence collect whatever is requisite to their design, and, after a thousand researches and consultations, are snatched away by death, as they stand *in procinctu* waiting for a proper opportunity to begin.

If there were no other end of life, than to find some adequate solace for every day, I know not whether any condition could be preferred to that of the man who involves himself in his own thoughts, and never suffers experience to show him the vanity of speculation; for no sooner are notions reduced to practice, than tranquillity and confidence forsake the breast; every day brings its task, and often without bringing abilities to perform it; difficulties embarrass, uncertainty perplexes, opposition retards, cen-

sure exasperates, or neglect depresses. We proceed, because we have begun; we complete our design, that the labour already spent may not be vain; but as expectation gradually dies away, the gay smile of alacrity disappears, we are compelled to implore severer powers, and trust the event to patience and constancy.

When once our labour has begun, the comfort that enables us to endure it is the prospect of its end; for though in every long work there are some joyous intervals of self-applause, when the attention is recreated by unexpected facility, and the imagination soothed by incidental excellences; yet the toil with which performance struggles after idea, is so irksome and disgusting, and so frequent is the necessity of resting below that perfection which we imagined within our reach, that seldom any man obtains more from his endeavours than a painful conviction of his defects, and a continual resuscitation of desires which he feels himself unable to gratify.

So certainly is weariness the concomitant of our undertakings, that every man, in whatever he is engaged, consoles himself with the hope of change; if he has made his way by assiduity to public employment, he talks among his friends of the delight of retreat; if by the necessity of solitary application he is secluded from the world, he listens with a beating heart to distant noises, longs to mingle with living beings, and resolves to take hereafter his fill of diversions, or display his abilities on the universal theatre, and enjoy the pleasure of distinction and applause.

Every desire, however innocent, grows dangerous, as by long indulgence it becomes ascendant in the mind. When we have been much accustomed to consider any thing as capable of giving happiness,

it is not easy to restrain our ardour, or to forbear some precipitation in our advances, and irregularity in our pursuits. He that has cultivated the tree, watched the swelling bud and opening blossom, and pleased himself with computing how much every sun and shower add to its growth, scarcely stays till the fruit has obtained its maturity, but defeats his own cares by eagerness to reward them. When we have diligently laboured for any purpose, we are willing to believe that we have attained it, and, because we have already done much, too suddenly conclude that no more is to be done.

All attraction is increased by the approach of the attracting body. We never find ourselves so desirous to finish, as in the latter part of our work; or so impatient of delay, as when we know that delay cannot be long. This unseasonable importunity of discontent may be partly imputed to languor and weariness, which must always oppress those more whose toil has been longer continued; but the greater part usually proceeds from frequent contemplation of that ease which is now considered as within reach, and which, when it has once flattered our hopes, we cannot suffer to be withheld.

In some of the noblest compositions of wit, the conclusion falls below the vigour and spirit of the first books; and as a genius is not to be degraded by the imputation of human failings, the cause of this declension is commonly sought in the structure of the work, and plausible reasons are given why in the defective part less ornament was necessary, or less could be admitted. But, perhaps, the author would have confessed that his fancy was tired, and his perseverance broken; that he knew his design to be unfinished, but that, when he saw the end so near, he could no longer refuse to be at rest.

Against the instillations of this frigid opiate, the heart should be secured by all the considerations which once concurred to kindle the ardour of enterprise. Whatever motive first incited action, has still greater force to stimulate perseverance; since he that might have lain still at first in blameless obscurity, cannot afterwards desist but with infamy and reproach. He, whom a doubtful promise of distant good could encourage to set difficulties at defiance, ought not to remit his vigour when he has almost obtained his recompense. To faint or loiter, when only the last efforts are required, is to steer the ship through tempests, and abandon it to the winds in sight of land; it is to break the ground and scatter the seed, and at last to neglect the harvest.

The masters of rhetoric direct, that the most forcible arguments be produced in the latter part of an oration, lest they should be effaced or perplexed by supervenient images. This precept may be justly extended to the series of life; nothing is ended with honour, which does not conclude better than it began. It is not sufficient to maintain the first vigour; for excellence loses its effect upon the mind by custom, as light after a time ceases to dazzle. Admiration must be continued by that novelty which first produced it, and how much soever is given, there must always be reason to imagine that more remains.

We not only are most sensible of the last impressions, but such is the unwillingness of mankind to admit transcendent merit, that, though it be difficult to obliterate the reproach of miscarriages by any subsequent achievement, however illustrious, yet the reputation raised by a long train of success, may be finally ruined by a single failure; for weakness or

error will be always remembered by that malice and envy which it gratifies.

For the prevention of that disgrace, which lassitude and negligence may bring at last upon the greatest performances, it is necessary to proportion carefully our labour to our strength. If the design comprises many parts, equally essential, and therefore not to be separated, the only time for caution is before we engage; the powers of the mind must be then impartially estimated, and it must be remembered that, not to complete the plan, is not to have begun it; and that nothing is done, while any thing is omitted.

But if the task consists in the repetition of single acts, no one of which derives its efficacy from the rest, it may be attempted with less scruple, because there is always opportunity to retreat with honour. The danger is only, lest we expect from the world the indulgence with which most are disposed to treat themselves; and in the hour of listlessness imagine, that the diligence of one day will atone for the idleness of another, and that applause begun by approbation will be continued by habit.

He that is himself weary will soon weary the public. Let him therefore lay down his employment, whatever it be, who can no longer exert his former activity or attention; let him not endeavour to struggle with censure, or obstinately infest the stage till a general hiss commands him to depart.

No. 208. SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 1752.

Ἡράκλειτος ἐγώ· τί με ὦ κάτω ἕλκετ' ἄμουσοι;
Οὐχ' ὑμῖν ἐπόνουν, τοῖς δέ μ' ἐπισταμένοις·
Εἷς ἐμοὶ ἄνθρωπος, τρισμύριοι· οἱ δ' ἀνάριθμοι
Οὐδείς· ταῦτ' αὐδῶ τὶ παρὰ Περσεφόνῃ.

DIOG. LAERT.

Begone, ye blockheads, Heraclitus cries,
And leave my labours to the learn'd and wise;
By wit, by knowledge, studious to be read,
I scorn the multitude, alive and dead.

Time, which puts an end to all human pleasures and sorrows, has likewise concluded the labours of The Rambler. Having supported, for two years, the anxious employment of a periodical writer, and multiplied my essays to six volumes,* I have now determined to desist.

The reasons of this resolution it is of little importance to declare, since justification is unnecessary when no objection is made. I am far from supposing that the cessation of my performances will raise any inquiry, for I have never been much a favourite of the public, nor can boast that, in the progress of my undertaking, I have been animated by the rewards of the liberal, the caresses of the great, or the praises of the eminent.

But I have no design to gratify pride by submission, or malice by lamentation; nor think it reason-

* The number of volumes on the first republication of The Rambler.

able to complain of neglect from those whose regard I never solicited. If I have not been distinguished by the distributers of literary honours, I have seldom descended to the arts by which favour is obtained. I have seen the meteors of fashion rise and fall, without any attempt to add a moment to their duration. I have never complied with temporary curiosity, nor enabled my readers to discuss the topic of the day; I have rarely exemplified my assertions by living characters; in my papers, no man could look for censures of his enemies, or praises of himself; and they only were expected to peruse them, whose passions left them leisure for abstracted truth, and whom virtue could please by its naked dignity.

To some, however, I am indebted for encouragement, and to others for assistance. The number of my friends was never great, but they have been such as would not suffer me to think that I was writing in vain, and I did not feel much dejection from the want of popularity.

My obligations having not been frequent, my acknowledgments may be soon dispatched. I can restore to all my correspondents their productions, with little diminution of the bulk of my volumes, though not without the loss of some pieces to which particular honours have been paid.

The parts from which I claim no other praise than that of having given them an opportunity of appearing, are the four billets in the tenth paper, the second letter in the fifteenth, the thirtieth, the forty-fourth, the ninety-seventh, and the hundredth papers, and the second letter in the hundred and seventh.

Having thus deprived myself of many excuses which candour might have admitted for the inequal-

ity of my compositions, being no longer able to allege the necessity of gratifying correspondents, the importunity with which publication was solicited, or obstinacy with which correction was rejected, I must remain accountable for all my faults, and submit, without subterfuge, to the censures of criticism, which, however, I shall not endeavour to soften by a formal deprecation, or to overbear by the influence of a patron. The supplications of an author never yet repriev'd him a moment from oblivion; and though greatness has sometimes sheltered guilt, it can afford no protection to ignorance or dulness. Having hitherto attempted only the propagation of truth, I will not at last violate it by the confession of terrors which I do not feel; having laboured to maintain the dignity of virtue, I will not now degrade it by the meanness of dedication.

The seeming vanity with which I have sometimes spoken of myself, would perhaps require an apology, were it not extenuated by the example of those who have published essays before me, and by the privilege which every nameless writer has been hitherto allowed. "A mask," says Castiglione, "confers a right of acting and speaking with less restraint, even when the wearer happens to be known." He that is discovered without his own consent, may claim some indulgence, and cannot be rigorously called to justify those sallies or frolics which his disguise must prove him desirous to conceal.

But I have been cautious lest this offence should be frequently or grossly committed; for, as one of the philosophers directs us to live with a friend, as with one that is some time to become an enemy, I have always thought it the duty of an anonymous author to write as if he expected to be hereafter known.

I am willing to flatter myself with hopes, that, by collecting these papers, I am not preparing for my future life either shame or repentance. That all are happily imagined or accurately polished, that the same sentiments have not sometimes recurred, or the same expressions been too frequently repeated, I have not confidence in my abilities sufficient to warrant. He that condemns himself to compose on a stated day, will often bring to his task an attention dissipated, a memory embarrassed, an imagination overwhelmed, a mind distracted with anxieties, a body languishing with disease; he will labour on a barren topic, till it is too late to change it; or, in the ardour of invention, diffuse his thoughts into wild exuberance, which the pressing hour of publication cannot suffer judgment to examine or reduce.

Whatever shall be the final sentence of mankind, I have at least endeavoured to deserve their kindness. I have laboured to refine our language to grammatical purity, and to clear it from colloquial barbarisms, licentious idioms, and irregular combinations. Something, perhaps, I have added to the elegance of its construction, and something to the harmony of its cadence. When common words were less pleasing to the ear, or less distinct in their signification, I have familiarized the terms of philosophy by applying them to popular ideas, but have rarely admitted any word not authorized by former writers; for I believe that whoever knows the English tongue in its present extent, will be able to express his thoughts without further help from other nations.

As it has been my principal design to inculcate wisdom or piety, I have allotted few papers to the idle sports of imagination. Some, perhaps, may be

found, of which the highest excellence is harmless merriment; but scarcely any man is so steadily serious as not to complain that the severity of dictatorial instruction has been too seldom relieved, and that he is driven by the sternness of The Rambler's philosophy to more cheerful and airy companions.

Next to the excursions of fancy are the disquisitions of criticism, which, in my opinion, is only to be ranked among the subordinate and instrumental arts. Arbitrary decision and general exclamation I have carefully avoided, by asserting nothing without a reason, and establishing all my principles of judgment on unalterable and evident truth.

In the pictures of life I have never been so studious of novelty or surprise as to depart wholly from all resemblance; a fault which writers deservedly celebrated frequently commit, that they may raise, as the occasion requires, either mirth or abhorrence. Some enlargement may be allowed to declamation, and some exaggeration to burlesque; but as they deviate further from reality, they become less useful, because their lessons will fail of application. The mind of the reader is carried away from the contemplation of his own manners; he finds in himself no likeness to the phantom before him; and though he laughs or rages, is not reformed.

The essays professedly serious, if I have been able to execute my own intentions, will be found exactly conformable to the precepts of Christianity, without any accommodation to the licentiousness and levity of the present age. I therefore look back on this part of my work with pleasure, which no blame or praise of man shall diminish or augment. I shall never envy the honours which wit and learning ob-

tain in any other cause, if I can be numbered among the writers who have given ardour to virtue, and confidence to truth.

Αὐτῶν ἐκ μακάρων ἀντάξιος ἔιη ἀμοιβή.

Celestial powers! that piety regard,
From you my labours wait their last reward.

END OF VOL. XVIII.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY
Los Angeles
This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

May 27 '60
Jan 23 61 LD
REC'D JAN 23 '61 LD
MAR 1 1967

n L9–42m–8,'49(B5573)444

AA 000 298 562 0